The Arabic Script in Africa

STUDIES IN THE USE OF A WRITING SYSTEM

EDITED BY

MEIKAL MUMIN & KEES VERSTEEGH

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Meikal Mumin
Kees Versteegh

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PREFACE

Most of the papers in the present volume are based on presentations at the TASIA (The Arabic Script in Africa—Diffusion, Usage, Diversity and Dynamics of a Writing System) workshop, which took place on April 6–7, 2010, at the University of Cologne, Germany. The workshop was organized by Helma Pasch and Meikal Mumin and hosted by the Institute for African Studies (Institut für Afrikanistik) of the University of Cologne (Universität zu Köln). It was generously funded by the Fritz Thyssen Foundation (Fritz Thyssen Stiftung für die Wissenschaft), Cologne, Germany, for which the editors would like to express their gratefulness.

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The editorial staff at Brill's, in particular Stephanie Paalvast, were most helpful in realizing the publication of this volume. During the production stage, Marjolein Schaake did an excellent job on a manuscript that was by all accounts complicated.

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INTRODUCTION

1

The Arabic script evolved from the Nabataean script in the northern part of the Arabian peninsula in the 4th/5th centuries CE (see Gruendler 1993). In the pre-Islamic period and during the first centuries of Islam, it was used exclusively for the writing of the Arabic language. Over time, mostly through religio-cultural transfer, it came to be used for the writing of other languages in Asia, Africa, and Europe, as well (see Kaye 2006). The present volume focuses on the use of Arabic script in Africa, and in particular on how Arabic script has been used to write African languages other than Arabic. Among the sixteen papers of this volume are studies on single or multiple languages from both a synchronic and a diachronic perspective. The articles deal with African languages belonging to all major linguistic phyla of Africa but one (Khoisan), from all geographic areas of Africa (North, West, Central, East, South Africa), both *in situ* and *ex situ* (the Americas).

A number of terms have been used in this volume to refer to the usage of Arabic script for languages other than Arabic. Crosslinguistically, such writing systems are often termed 'Arabic literature', 'Islamic literature' or 'Islamic writings', and locally they are known by a large number of names, such as *Wolofal*, or *Kiarabu*. The term *Ajami* in particular (or variations, such as *Äjam*, *Ajamiya*, etc.), derived from the Arabic word *ʿağam* 'non-Arab; Persian', has gained some degree of popularity in academic literature and is also encountered as a self-denomination for these writing systems in some languages, such as Hausa. In the present volume, we will use the term 'Arabic script' for the writing system in general, 'Arabic-based script' for the writing system employed for languages other than Arabic, and 'Arabic(-based) orthography' for the writing system applied to one particular language.

The present volume focuses on linguistic aspects of the contents and contexts of these writing traditions. More specifically, the papers deal with linguistic, grammatological, sociolinguistic, and historical aspects of the emergence and the past and present usage of these traditions, with an emphasis on the sociolinguistics of writing (see Unseth 2008).

2

The papers in this volume have been arranged geographically. The introductory section features two general papers. Peter Daniels steps beyond the boundaries of Africa and discusses the adaptations of Arabic script across the world. He discusses the expansion of the expressive capacities of Arabic(-based) scripts within their historical context, and the logic behind this development.

Meikal Mumin discusses the question of why Arabic script should be considered understudied, as well as the reasons for and the consequences of this situation. Also, the paper presents an overview of the linguistic and geographic spread of Arabic script in Africa and highlights some of the implications and potential benefits of this field of study.

North Africa differs from other regions in that it is part of the Arabic-speaking world. The main challenge here was to find a way to represent the Berber languages, which were widely spoken and remain the language of large minorities in the Maghreb countries. In this section there are two papers. Maarten Kossmann and Ramada Elghamis deal with the Tuareg writing tradition. Tuareg, a Berber language, is written in three different scripts, Latin/Roman, Arabic, and an indigenous script called *tifinaġ*. The corpus of documents in Arabic script used by the authors consists of personal letters and a theological text, collected during fieldwork in Niger, where this tradition is still alive.[1]

In his paper, Lameen Souag analyzes the use of Arabic script to represent Shelḥa, i.e., all non-Arabic languages that are spoken in southwestern Algeria. His material consists of contributions by speakers of these varieties to internet forums. The nature of this material makes it possible, not only to study the orthographical practices, but also the sociolinguistic attitudes of the speakers toward these varieties and the different ways to represent them in writing.

In terms of number of languages with an Arabic-based script, West Africa is no doubt the region with the largest variation. The section on West Africa contains six papers. By comparing orthographic practice in interlin-

[1] Strictly speaking, this is not a North African tradition since the bulk of the speakers of Tuareg live in Mali and Niger (between one and two million in total); in Algeria, there are only about 60,000 Tuaregs and in Libya maybe 10,000 (Maarten Kossmann p.c., 9.4.2010). Nonetheless, for historical and linguistic reasons, we have chosen to include this paper in the section on North Africa.

ear glosses of two Qur'ān manuscripts with other historical and contemporary writing practices and scholarly descriptions, Dmitry Bondarev reconstructs the phonological system of a historical and pan-dialectal written variety of Kanuri language, called Old Kanembu or language of the glosses, which is one of the oldest African writing traditions in Arabic-based script. Bondarev argues that in the case of Old Kanembu, over- and underspecification of orthographies are rather analytical than practical problems, and that orthographical under-specification relates not only to socio-cultural factors, but also to phonological factors in the context of written texts, which yet remain part of the oral domain.

Based on her work of preservation and digitization of a 600-page corpus in private holding in Yola (Nigeria) in Fulfulde language, Anneke Breedveld presents some analyzed and translated excerpts of these materials. After a summary of the historical context and the authorship of these writings, she describes the current state of the corpus and the social role played by such texts, as well as the difficulties presented in annotation and translation. She also draws the attention to Arabic influence in this literary tradition.

Nikolay Dobronravin's paper discusses a special case, the use of Arabic script to represent West African languages in the Americas, in particular in the Caribbean (Trinidad) and Brazil (Bahia). The article traces the history of the available manuscripts and provides translations for a number of manuscripts. The discussion focuses on the difficulties inherent in this material because of the degree of code-switching/code-mixing, which can involve lexical material from Arabic, Eastern Fula, Mandinka, and English or English-based Caribbean Creole, among others.

Marie-Ève Humery explores why the use of Arabic script for the Fula language within Haalpulaar society (North Senegal) has remained underdeveloped compared to adjacent linguistic and cultural areas. She traces the historical development and the socio-political interests of the different actors that have affected the choice between Roman/Latin and Arabic script among the Fula. Her discussion of this highly idiosyncratic writing tradition, which is (still) not taught, but 'self-discovered' leads her to analyze the Fula Arabic-based orthography in Fuuta Tooro as a private written code and a socially limited literacy practice rather than a writing system for everybody and everything.

Valentin Vydrin compares ten different Arabic-based orthographical traditions for the representation of Mande languages. After a summary of their historical context, contemporary relevance, and orthographical effectiveness, he classifies these traditions diachronically, based on shared grammatological features.

In a second article, co-authored by Gérard Dumestre, Vydrin presents a critical edition of three texts in Mandinka, and five texts in Bamana, including a detailed transliteration, transcription, and translation, together with comments on grammatological, linguistic and interpretational issues.

Andy Warren-Rothlin provides us with an overview of written Hausa, Fulfulde and Chadian Arabic, which share a number of sociolinguistic features, including aspects of their historical experience under colonialism, digraphic representation, multiple Arabic-script orthographies, as well as restricted domains in which Arabic script is used. Modern orthographies of these three languages are presented and discussed, as well as the National Alphabet of Chad, and some typical problems are highlighted, relating to phonology, orthography and Arabic loanwords, and (non-)standardization.

The best-known example of an Arabic-script based tradition in East Africa is that of Swahili, but Bana Banafunzi and Alessandra Vianello show that Swahili was not the only language on the east coast of Africa to be written in Arabic script, nor was it the only intellectual pole of the coastal societies referred to as Swahili. They present material from Chimi:ni (also Chimiini, Chimbalazi, Chimwiini, Bravanese), a little studied Bantu language originally spoken in Brava (Somalia), and compare the orthographical properties of two versions of the same poem written in Arabic script.

The other two papers in this section discuss very different contexts in which Swahili in Arabic script was used. Clarissa Vierke deals with the literary tradition in the old Swahili centres of Pate and Lamu, focusing on the particular ways in which Arabic script represents *utendi* poetry, and demonstrating how Arabic script as an *abjad* was ideally suited for the representation of the prosodic structure of this literary genre.

Xavier Luffin shows that Swahili in Arabic script was not only used for literary or religious purposes, but also for secular correspondence. He studies documents from the eastern part of the Belgian Congo, dating from the end of the 19th century. Swahili traders used Arabic script to represent Swahili in their correspondence with colleagues and with the representatives of the Belgian colonial regime.

The two papers in the section on South Africa deal with a lesser known orthographical tradition, that of the Cape Muslim community. In the second half of the 19th and the first half of the 20th century, this community used Arabic script to represent Afrikaans, a language developed from Dutch, which had become their mother tongue. The corpus of texts in this tradition, which is normally called Arabic-Afrikaans, consists of more than seventy-five texts.

In the first paper in this section, Muhammad Haron deals with one of the products of this tradition, *al-Qawl al-matīn*, a theological text that was probably translated in 1910 by a member of the Cape Muslim community. Haron shows how the translator/copyist engaged in 'orthographical engineering' in order to represent the sounds of Afrikaans as faithfully as possible in Arabic script.

Kees Versteegh uses a small document, an election pamphlet written in 1884 in Arabic-Afrikaans, to discuss matters pertaining to the form of Afrikaans used by the Muslim authors, in particular the question of whether these authors were affected by the norms of Standard Dutch.

3

In this book, several layers of transcription and transliteration are used. Since we had to deal with a complex mixture of linguistic and orthographic traditions, we decided to harmonize the transcription and transliteration, reducing them principally to three types:

i. graphemic transliteration, always represented between angle brackets (⟨⟩).
ii. phonemic transcription, always respresented between (forward) slashes (//), using only IPA.
iii. language-specific transcriptions employed by authors for specific languages and represented with italics; these follow either the transcriptional standard in the linguistic tradition concerned (e.g. Swahilist, Mandeist, etc.), or any established Latin/Roman-script orthography for the language under discussion; for the language-specific transcriptions tables are provided with phonemic equivalents using IPA; for terms which are properly Arabic (except for established loanwords in English), we follow the standard Arabist tradition, using a transcription system similar to that employed in the *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics* (Eid et al. 2006–2009).

For the graphemic transliteration (i), we had to come up with a new system, since all established traditions of Arabic script transcription/transliteration actually transcribe realizations in pronunciation. For example, the so-called sun letters (*ḥurūf šamsiyya*), consonants to which the /l/ of the precliticized article assimilates in pronunciation, though not in writing, are often transcribed in Latin/Roman script in the assimilated way. Therefore, ⟨ʾlšms⟩ [ʔaʃ.ʃams] is usually transcribed as *aš-šams*, not *al-šams*. Established

traditions of Arabic script transcription/transliteration are adapted to the readership, reusing to some degree phonological rules of the readers' languages. Transcriptions for German or English readers often do not transcribe word-initial glottal stops, for instance, since in their languages words with a vocalic onset are automatically realized with a glottal stop before the initial vowel.

Accordingly, dealing with Arabic script and Arabic-based script for a number of languages in a comparative manner required representing each and every (meaningful) unit of the writing system. Since Arabic(-based) script differs conceptually in a number of ways from Latin/Roman script, this was not an easy task. Factors complicating any adequate transliteration include:

i. Basic letter shapes vs. *nuqṭa*/*ʾiʿǧām*
   When Arabic script split off from Nabataean script, it had a very small inventory of letters, nearly all of which were significantly underspecified. At least from the 7th century onward (Bauer 1996: 559), a system of pointing or dotting, called *nuqṭa* '[diacritical] dot' or *ʾiʿǧām* 'providing letters with diacritical dots' was developed, hugely increasing the specification of those letters and distinguishing different meanings with different dottings above or below a basic letter shape. In Roman/Latin script, there is a significantly higher number of unmodified basic letter shapes or baseline characters, which are graphically singular units.
ii. Featurality of Arabic script
   The dots and points that over time have been added to baseline characters or basic letter shapes in order to raise the differentiation of the script have not been added in a completely arbitrary fashion, but "in a phonologically sensible, nearly systematic way […]" (Daniels 1997: 296, 372). These mechanisms and strategies for creation and adaptation of new graphs have been re-employed by the different Arabic script-based orthographic traditions. Maintaining this association in transliterating into Roman/Latin script is obviously quite difficult.
iii. Calligraphy vs. orthography
   In Arabic script there is a high degree of calligraphic variation, to the extent that variants of the same letter might very well be considered new letters. Furthermore, there are different *qirāʾāt* 'readings', which represent different exegetical traditions concerning the recitation (and accordingly pronunciation) of the Qurʾān (see Leemhuis 2004; Shah 2009; Nasser 2013). Two such prominent and more diver-

gent exegetical traditions are those attributed to the Readers ʾAbū ʿAmr Ḥafṣ ibn Sulaymān ibn al-Muġīra al-Kūfī (d. 796), which became the dominant version in the Ottoman empire, and ʿUṯmān ibn Saʿīd Warš al-Qurašī al-Miṣrī (d. 812), which became the most widespread tradition in North and West Africa. These exegetical traditions have sought not only to preserve what they perceived as the correct interpretation of the Qurʾān, but also what they saw as its correct pronunciation (*taǧwīd*). Accordingly, there is a whole set of extra graphs, such as the so-called (subscripted) Warš dot ◌̣ ⟨e⟩, which indicates the *ʾimāla*, i.e., raising of the vowel [a] in certain contexts. Outside Arabic script-based orthographies, such graphs are functionally restricted to the writing of the Qurʾān, and will never be encountered outside a Qurʾān manuscript. In addition, the two traditions of Ḥafṣ and Warš also feature different graphical forms for three letters (*fāʾ*, *qāf*, *nūn*).

iv. Vertical vs. horizontal stacking of letters
Vertical stacking, i.e. the combination of graphemes in a vertical line is a much more frequently used strategy in Arabic script than in Roman/ Latin script. This can involve multiple (two to maybe four or five) graphs being super- or subscripted to an autonomous (basic) letter, such as أَ ⟨ʾʔa⟩, some, or all of which, would be represented in Roman/ Latin script by autonomous letters. Due to the cursiveness of Arabic script, in handwriting it is difficult to speak of super- and subscripting, since in fact the actual graphical positioning might be left or right or at any other angle or distance to the baseline character. Therefore, representing this mixture of vertical vs. horizontal stacking of letters can be very complicated and, when it comes to Arabic-based script, it is impossible to determine whether a super- or subscripted graph should precede or follow the (basic) letter it is added to, and one has to take an educated guess.

v. Non-phonemic units of writing
While Roman/Latin script is strongly phonemic in its choice of units for graphemic representation, Arabic script has a number of graphs that do not denote phonemes, but other units. In fact, it has been argued that the basic unit of representation of Arabic script is not a phoneme, but a mora (Ratcliffe 2001: 557); this argument finds some support in the prosodic analysis in Clarissa Vierke's article (this volume). Such graphs include the *sukūn* ◌ْ ⟨^{0}⟩, which denotes the absence of a following vowel, and *šadda*/*tašdīd* ◌ّ ⟨^{2}⟩, which indicates reduplication or consonantal length. Some involve even multiple units, such

as the so-called *ḥurūf al-madd wa-l-līn* 'letters of lengthening and glide', i.e. three consonants (*wāw*, *yāʾ*, *ʾalif*) that are added to the three vowel signs in order to represent vocalic length.[2]

In our transliteration, we represent each graph occurring in connected spellings. 'Graph' is defined here as any element of the graphemic stream, whether baseline character, super- or subscripted, segmental or non-segmental. 'Graphemic stream' is defined as the visual and logical order dictating the linearity in reading a script. We regard as a 'grapheme', on the other hand, any meaningful unit of the graphemic stream chosen by a given orthography for written representation of the sounds of the language (which is usually dictated by the type of script, in the sense of Daniels 1990: 295). According to this definition, the two calligraphic varieties of *fāʾ*, one following the Ḥafṣ tradition (ف) and one following the Warš tradition (ڢ) constitute two different 'graphs', but one 'grapheme' in Arabic orthography. In other Arabic-based orthographies, they could very well constitute two different graphemes. Accordingly, these are represented differently in our cross-linguistic and therefore cross-orthographic system of transliteration.[3]

In order to avoid a complete break with Arabist traditions, we encode the twenty-eight basic letters of Arabic script (as used for Modern Standard Arabic) with their traditional transcriptions. For the remaining graphs, we were faced with the (sometimes arbitrary) choice of how to represent them. Three possible strategies presented themselves:

i. Arbitrary representation, i.e. simply assigning any kind of symbol. Obviously, at some point it would become pointless transliterating, and one could just as well read Arabic (-based) script itself
ii. Phonemic/phonetic representation, i.e. indicating the actual pronunciation of any graph employed in Arabic-based script. The problem here was that despite shared uses of additional or adopted Arabic-based script letters, at least as many such graphs have completely dif-

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[2] For the status of these consonants in the phonological framework of the Arabic grammatical tradition see Bohas & Guillaume (1984: 241–294); their function in Arabic script is similar to that of the so-called *matres lectionis* in Hebrew script.

[3] In Latin/Roman script, such variants would probably be considered glyphs—different graphic representations of the same grapheme. A Warš dot, for example, cannot be considered to be a graphic representation of a grapheme: it is not a grapheme in the sense that it is obligatorily used in spelling, since it is not chosen in Arabic script for principal representation. Yet, for the sake of clarity, it must be specified where needed. It might make more sense, therefore, to consider Arabic script to be a pool of forms and grammatological strategies rather than a fixed corpus of graphemes.

fering sound values in the various orthographic traditions of the Arabic script.

iii. Pictographic representation, i.e. representing graphs by using a symbol with similar graphic shape, such as representing *fatḥa* ◌َ ⟨a⟩ /a/ by an acute accent, i.e. ⟨´⟩. Obviously, this would only help readers already familiar with Arabic script to some degree and it would completely ignore the discussed featurality of Arabic script.

Eventually, we opted for a mixed system, to some degree inspired by the system conventionally used in transliterating cuneiform script, in which any adapted baseline letter is coded as a variant of a basic letter by subscript ordinal Roman numbers, representing super- and subscript graphs either phonemically (if any common sound value exists for such graphs), or by more or less arbitrary symbols. In some cases, the choice of symbol was suggested by the form, sometimes by the function of the graph, for instance when *šadda* ◌ّ is represented by ⟨^{2}⟩, referring to its function as a marker of reduplication.

We see several advantages for such a system of transliteration. In the first place, it is easily expandable should the need arise. It reflects to some degree the featurality of the script, but is visually less bulky and comparatively readable, not differentiating between small and capital letters, and restricting super- and subscript characters mostly to numbers. In addition, this system of transliteration can easily represent the vast majority of Arabic-based script graphs. Difficulties are only presented by those Arabic script graphs normally not represented in Arabist transliteration (mostly the super- and subscript graphs).

The only case we could imagine where this system would not work would be an Arabic-based script with a large number of genuine graphic innovations, bearing no recognizable relation to any Arabic script character, since this would raise the number of arbitrary representations to the level of becoming pointless. To our knowledge, in Africa this applies only to seven letters from one of the many Somali Arabic-based orthographical traditions (Lewis 1958: 475), which may very well have been influenced by Ethiopic and/or Roman/Latin script in shape and conception. Outside Africa, the Dhivehi script used in the Maldives represents perhaps a case in which the form of the Arabic characters was developed independently (Gair & Cain 1996).

Some remarks are in order about the general principles followed in transliteration and the problems encountered in transliterating:

i. Representing vertical linearity in horizontal transliteration
As discussed above, Arabic script has sub- and superscripted graphs, here represented on a placeholding dotted circle ⟨◌⟩. Some of these graphs are conventionally represented in Roman/Latin by autonomous graphemic segments, i.e. graphs like the diacritical vowel signs *fatḥa* ◌َ ⟨a⟩ /a/, *kasra* ◌ِ ⟨i⟩ /a/, or *ḍamma* ◌ُ ⟨u⟩, or *šadda* ◌ّ ⟨²⟩. Others are not represented at all, such as *sukūn* ◌ْ ⟨⁰⟩. In general, we have chosen to follow the linearity expected from Modern Standard Arabic wherever possible, transliterating sub- and superscripted graphs after the consonant they belong to; *hamza* bearers (*kursī*) precede the *hamza*. Thus, أَ is transliterated as ⟨ʾʔa⟩, rather than ⟨ʔʾa⟩, or ⟨ʾaʔ⟩.

ii. Emic before etic
When discussing Arabic script graphs, we always give the Arabic script graph before the transliteration, followed by a transcription (where applicable) and a gloss.

iii. Transliteration of spellings only
To keep the amount of transliterations manageable, as a rule we transliterate only connected spellings, i.e. more than one graph combined.

iv. (Non-standard) positional variety
In Arabic(-based) script, graphs have different shapes depending on their position within a segmental unit and some letters do not connect by principle. Unless it deviates from the standard, this is not marked. Any non-standard positional variety (initial, medial, or final variants for normally non-connecting graphs) is indicated by a dash, i.e. ⟨-⟩ before or after the character (e.g. ⟨-l⟩, ⟨l-⟩, or ⟨-l-⟩), while any non-standard isolated positional variant is preceded by a dot, i.e. ⟨.⟩ (e.g. ⟨.y⟩).

v. Diachronic vs. synchronic analysis
Obviously, graphs such as ب, ت, and ث, can all be considered to be based on one single letter shape. We have opted for a diachronic analysis of all Arabic script graphs, which had been raised in specification through the process of pointing (see above), since in all probability, at least African languages have made contact with Arabic script only after this defining moment. Therefore, we would not opt for representing, for instance, ت as ⟨b_2⟩.

vi. Unclear derivational processes
In few cases, a grapheme could plausibly be a derivation of more than one grapheme, e.g. ⟨y_3⟩. In the latter case, there was no single occurrence in isolation of that character, and from the looks in connected

> spellings, it could be based either on ب or similar, or on ي. Therefore the authors concerned with the only manuscripts, where this grapheme occurred (Vydrin & Dumestre, this volume), chose to analyze it based on certain featural properties, and accordingly classified it as a derivation of ⟨y⟩, not ⟨b⟩ or something else.

The system of transliteration has been used throughout all papers in the present volume; it is summarized in Tables 1 and 2 below. Table 1 gives the names and transliterations, as well as the letter shapes following the Ḥafṣ orthographic tradition, which is the most common one for Modern Standard Arabic. All letters are given in isolated form. Table 2 lists the symbols representing additional graphs, as used in the traditions analyzed in this volume.

Table 1: Transliteration for standard Arabic script graphs

Name	Arabic script	Transliteration
ʾalif	ا	ʾ
bāʾ	ب	b
tāʾ	ت	t
ṯāʾ	ث	ṯ
ǧīm	ج	ǧ
ḥāʾ	ح	ḥ
ḫāʾ	خ	ḫ
dāl	د	d
ḏāl	ذ	ḏ
rāʾ	ر	r
zāy	ز	z
sīn	س	s
šīn	ش	š
ṣād	ص	ṣ
ḍād	ض	ḍ
ṭāʾ	ط	ṭ
ẓāʾ	ظ	ḏ̣
ʿayn	ع	ʿ
ġayn	غ	ġ

Name	Arabic script	Transliteration
fāʾ	ف	f
qāf	ق	q
kāf	ك	k
lām	ل	l
mīm	م	m
nūn	ن	n
hāʾ	ه	h
wāw	و	w
yāʾ	ي	y

Table 2: Finding list of special characters

Name or description	Arabic script[4]	Transliteration	Occurrence[5]
Warš dot (*ʾimāla*)	◌ٜ	e	Bondarev
			Breedveld
			Dobronravin
			*Kossmann & Elghamis
			Vydrin
			Vydrin & Dumestre
			Warren-Rothlin
Yeh Barreh	ے	not indicated	*Warren-Rothlin
dagger *ʾalif*	◌ٰ	ᵃ (superscript a)	Bondarev
			*Daniels
			*Haron
			*Kossmann & Elghamis
			Vierke
			Vydrin & Dumestre
			Warren-Rothlin

[4] * indicates characters not encoded in Unicode

[5] * indicates articles in which the character occurs without transliteration; articles between brackets mention or describe the character without showing it in printed form

Name or description	Arabic script	Transliteration	Occurrence
dagger ʾ*alif* below	◌ٖ	$_a$ (subscript a)	Warren-Rothlin
waṣla	ٱ	not indicated	not indicated
madda	◌ٓ	$^{\bar{a}}$ (superscript a with macron)	Banafunzi & Vianello
			Breedveld
			Dobronravin
			*Haron
sukūn	◌ْ	^{0} (superscript zero)	Banafunzi & Vianello
			Bondarev
			Haron
			Souag
			Versteegh
			Vierke
			Vydrin
			Vydrin & Dumestre
			Warren-Rothlin
hamza	◌ٔ	ʔ (IPA glottal stop sign)	Bondarev
			Dobronravin
			Souag
			Vierke
			Vydrin & Dumestre
			Warren-Rothlin
ʾ*alif* + *hamza* above	أ	ʾʔ (ʾ + IPA sign)	Banafunzi & Vianello
			Bondarev
			*Haron
			Souag
			Vierke
			Vydrin & Dumestre
ʾ*alif* + *hamza* below	إ	ʾʔ$_i$ (ʾ + IPA sign + subscript i)	Banafunzi & Vianello
			Souag
			Vydrin & Dumestre

Name or description	Arabic script	Transliteration	Occurrence
tāʾ marbūṭa	ة	ẗ (t with diaresis)	Breedveld
			Dobronravin
			Souag
			Vydrin & Dumestre
			Warren-Rothlin
šadda	◌ّ	^{2} (superscript 2)	Banafunzi & Vianello
			Bondarev
			Breedveld
			Dobronravin
			*Kossmann & Elghamis
			Versteegh
			Vierke
			Vydrin & Dumestre
			Warren-Rothlin
fatḥa	◌َ	a	throughout
tanwīn a	◌ً	a^n (a + superscript n)	Dobronravin
			Vydrin
			Vydrin & Dumestre
kasra	◌ِ	i	throughout
tanwīn kasra	◌ٍ	i^n (i + superscript n)	Dobronravin
			*Kossmann & Elghamis
			Vydrin
			Vydrin & Dumestre
ḍamma	◌ُ	u	throughout
tanwīn ḍamma	◌ٌ	u^n (u + superscript n)	Vydrin
			Vydrin & Dumestre
fatḥa + *kasra*	◌َِ	ai	Versteegh
fatḥa + Warš dot (*ʾimāla*)	◌َٜ	ae	Vydrin
			Vydrin & Dumestre
kasra + Warš dot (*ʾimāla*)	◌ِٜ	ie	Vydrin

Name or description	Arabic script	Transliteration	Occurrence
ḍamma + Warš dot (*ʾimāla*)	◌ُ	ue	Vydrin
lām + *ʾalif* ligature	لا	lʾ	Bondarev
			Haron
			Souag
bāʾ with three dots below	پ	b_1	Banafunzi & Vianello
			*Daniels
			Luffin
			*Souag
			Versteegh
			*Vydrin
			Warren-Rothlin
bāʾ with two vertical dots below	ٻ	b_2	*Daniels
			*Vydrin
			*Warren-Rothlin
bāʾ with three dots above and one dot below	ݑ	b_3	*Warren-Rothlin
bāʾ with four dots below	ڀ	b_4	*Daniels
bāʾ with three dots above	*Unclear	b_5	(Vierke)
tāʾ with superimposed *tāʾ*	*ت	t^t (t + superscript t)	Banafunzi & Vianello
tāʾ with superimposed *ṭāʾ*	ٹ	$t^{ṭ}$ (t + superscript ṭ)	*Daniels
tāʾ with three dots above	ث	t_1	*Warren-Rothlin
tāʾ with three inverted dots above	ٽ	t_2	*Daniels
			*Warren-Rothlin
tāʾ with hacek/caron above	ٮ̌	t_3	*Warren-Rothlin
tāʾ with two vertical dots above	ٺ	t_3	*Daniels
tāʾ with empty ring below	ټ	t_4	*Daniels
ṯāʾ with four dots above	ٿ	$\underline{t}_1$	*Daniels
			*Kossmann & Elghamis
			(Vierke)

Name or description	Arabic script	Transliteration	Occurrence
ṯā' with additional two dots below	ث	$\underline{t}_2$	*Vydrin
ṯā' with additional three dots below	*Unclear	$\underline{t}_3$	(Warren-Rothlin)
ǧīm with three dots below	چ	$\check{g}_1$	Banafunzi & Vianello *Daniels *Vydrin Warren-Rothlin
ǧīm with two vertical dots below	ڄ	$\check{g}_2$	*Daniels *Vydrin *Warren-Rothlin
ǧīm with two horizontal dots below	ڃ	$\check{g}_3$	*Daniels *Warren-Rothlin
ǧīm with four dots below	ڇ	$\check{g}_4$	*Daniels
ǧīm with three dots above	څ	$\check{g}_5$	*Daniels
ḥā' with *hamza* above	ځ	$ḥ^{ʔ}$	*Daniels
dāl with superscript *nūn*	*دۨ	d^n (d + superscript n)	Banafunzi & Vianello
dāl with superscript *ṭā'*	ڈ	$d^{ṭ}$ (d + superscript ṭ)	*Daniels
dāl with two dots below	ڍ	d_1	*Daniels
dāl with one dot below	ڊ	d_2	*Daniels *Warren-Rothlin
dāl with two vertical dots above	ڌ	d_3	*Vydrin
dāl with two horizontal dots above	ڌ	d_4	*Daniels
dāl with three dots above	ڎ	d_5	*Daniels *Vydrin
dāl with three dots below	ࢮ	d_6	Souag

Name or description	Arabic script	Transliteration	Occurrence
dāl with empty ring below	ډ	d_7	*Daniels
dāl with four dots above	*Unclear	d_8	(Vierke)
rā' with superscript *ṭā'*	ڑ	$r^{ṭ}$ (r + superscript ṭ)	*Daniels
rā' with superscript *nūn*	*Unclear	r^{n} (r + superscript n)	(Banafunzi & Vianello)
rā' with four dots above	ڙ	r_1	*Daniels
rā' with a dot below and one inside	ږ	r_2	*Daniels
rā' with empty ring below	ړ	r_3	*Daniels
zāy with two horizontal dots above	ڗ	z_1	*Daniels
zāy with three dots above	ژ	z_2	*Daniels *Warren-Rothlin
šīn with one dot below	ۺ	$š_1$	*Warren-Rothlin
ḍād with two dots above	*ۻ	$ḍ_1$	*Warren-Rothlin
ḍād with additional three dots above	ڞ	$ḍ_2$	Warren-Rothlin
ṭā' with three dots	ڟ	$ṭ_1$	Banafunzi & Vianello *Warren-Rothlin
ġayn with three dots above	ڠ	$ġ_1$	Banafunzi & Vianello Breedveld *Daniels *Vydrin *Warren-Rothlin
ġayn with two horizontal dots above	ݝ	$ġ_2$	*Warren-Rothlin
Warš *fā'*	ڢ	f_1	Breedveld Kossmann & Elghamis Vydrin Vydrin & Dumestre Warren-Rothlin

Name or description	Arabic script	Transliteration	Occurrence
fāʾ with three dots	ڤ	f_2	Banafunzi & Vianello *Daniels Luffin Versteegh Warren-Rothlin
fāʾ with one additional dot below	ڣ	f_3	*Warren-Rothlin
fāʾ with three inverted dots below	ڥ	f_4	*Warren-Rothlin
fāʾ with four dots above	ڦ	f_5	*Daniels
fāʾ with two horizontal dots below	ف̤	f_6	*Warren-Rothlin
fāʾ with three dots above and one dot below	*ࢤ	f_7	*Warren-Rothlin
Warš *qāf*	ڧ	q_1	Kossmann & Elghamis *Vydrin Vydrin & Dumestre Warren-Rothlin
qāf with three dots	ڨ	q_2	Kossmann & Elghamis Souag (Vierke) *Warren-Rothlin
qāf with one dot below	*ࢥ	q_3	*Warren-Rothlin
qāf with three dots below	*ق	q_4	(Kossmann & Elghamis)
kāf with stroke	گ	k_1	*Daniels Warren-Rothlin
Persian *kāf*	ک	k_2	*Daniels Vydrin Warren-Rothlin

Name or description	Arabic script	Transliteration	Occurrence
kāf with three dots above	ڭ	k_3	*Daniels *Souag Warren-Rothlin
kāf with one dot above	ڬ	k_4	*Vydrin Vydrin & Dumestre
Swash *kāf*	ڪ	k_5	*Daniels *Warren-Rothlin
kāf with three dots below	ڮ	k_6	*Banafunzi & Vianello *Kossmann & Elghamis *Warren-Rothlin
Persian *kāf* with three dots above	ݣ	k_7	*Daniels (Souag) *Vydrin
kāf with stroke and two dots above	گ	k_8	*Daniels
kāf with stroke above and two vertical dots below	ڳ	k_9	*Daniels
Persian *kāf* with empty ring inside	ڰ	k_{10}	*Daniels
Persian *kāf* with one dot above	ݢ	k_{11}	*Daniels
lām with three dots above	ڷ	l_1	Banafunzi & Vianello
lām with one horizontal crossing stroke	ݪ	l_2	*Warren-Rothlin
lām with two horizontal crossing strokes	*ࢦ	l_3	*Warren-Rothlin
mīm with one dot below	ݦ	m_1	*Warren-Rothlin
mīm with three dots above	*ࢧ	m_2	*Warren-Rothlin
Combining superscript *mīm*	*Unclear	^{m} (superscript m)	(Vierke)

Name or description	Arabic script	Transliteration	Occurrence
Warš *nūn*	ں	n_1	Breedveld
			Vydrin
			Vydrin & Dumestre
			Warren-Rothlin
Warš nūn with superscript *ṭā'*	ڻ	$n_1^{ṭ}$	*Daniels
nūn with one dot above and two horizontal dots below	ݧ	n_2	*Warren-Rothlin
nūn with three dots above	ڽ	n_3	*Daniels
nūn with empty ring below	ڼ	n_4	*Daniels
Combining superscript *hā'*	*◌	^{h} (superscript h)	(Vierke)
Pointed *hā'*	ھ	h_1	*Daniels
wāw with three dots	ۋ	w_1	*Daniels
			*Vydrin
			*Warren-Rothlin
yā' with superscript *nūn*[6]	ـيۨـ	y^n (superscript n)	Banafunzi & Vianello
'alif maqṣūra	ى	y_1	Banafunzi & Vianello
			Bondarev
			Dobronravin
			Haron
			Souag
			Versteegh
			Vierke
			Vydrin
			Vydrin & Dumestre
			Warren-Rothlin
yā' with three dots below	ۑ	y_2	*Vydrin
			Vydrin & Dumestre
			*Warren-Rothlin

[6] Not evidenced in independent form.

Name or description	Arabic script	Transliteration	Occurrence
yā' with two dots below[7] and one dot above	ـࢩـ	y3	*Vydrin Vydrin & Dumestre
yā' with two vertical dots below	ې	y4	*Daniels *Warren-Rothlin
yā' with one additional dot above	ࢩ	y5	*Warren-Rothlin
reversed *ḍamma*	◌ٝ	u1	*Vydrin Vydrin & Dumestre Warren-Rothlin
vowel sign small v above	◌ٚ	ˇ (hacek/caron)	Banafunzi & Vianello *Daniels Warren-Rothlin
vowel sign inverted small v above	◌ٛ	ˆ (circumflex)	Warren-Rothlin
ġunna	◌٘	˘ (breve)	Warren-Rothlin
ḍamma with dot inside	*◌ࣾ	Not indicated	*Vydrin
non-standard non-connecting variety		. (dot)	Warren-Rothlin
non-standard positional variety		- (dash)	Bondarev Vydrin Vydrin & Dumestre
separator of spelling alternatives		~ (tilde)	Vydrin

7 Not evidenced in independent form.

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SECTION I

GENERAL PROBLEMS OF ARABIC-SCRIPT BASED TRADITIONS

THE TYPE AND SPREAD OF ARABIC SCRIPT

Peter T. Daniels

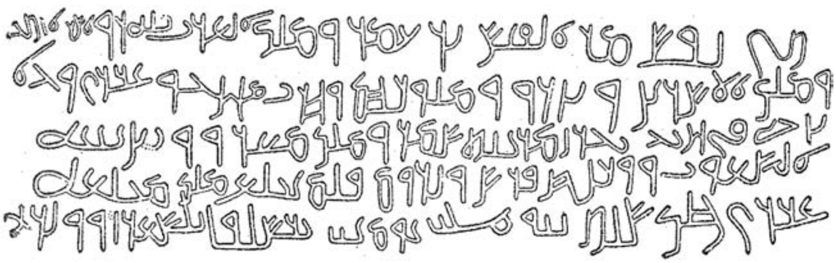
The Arabic script is not terribly old, as modern writing systems go. It first appears, rather tentatively, shortly before the Islamic era, and achieved its present forms in the first centuries AH (Gruendler 1993). Its application to other languages seems to have begun around the 11th century CE, with Persian, but since then it has been used for a very wide variety of languages, wherever Islam has been taught, and this wide applicability is due in large part to the adaptability of the structure of its characters (Daniels 1997). This chapter shows where that structure came from, and how it has been used.

The corpus of pre-Islamic Arabic-language inscriptions is tiny. Only a handful are known, the dated ones from between 328 and 568 CE, written in Nabataean, or early Arabic script. In addition, there are tens of thousands of early graffiti on rocks in the Arabian deserts in languages very similar to Arabic but using South Arabian style-scripts (Macdonald 2004). Arabic writing emerged from Nabataean writing, one of a large family of Middle Aramaic scripts current around the turn of the Common Era (Klugkist 1982). The Nabataeans were based in the magnificent city of Petra in today's Jordanian desert. Their kingdom proper at its greatest extent covered the Sinai peninsula to the west, reached east of the Jordan River as far north as Damascus, south to Leukē Komē on the Red Sea coast of Arabia, and to the east of Teima; but they controlled the caravan routes throughout Arabia. The Nabataeans were an Arab people, but they continued to write in Aramaic, as had been done in the region for at least a thousand years.

When they first started writing Arabic, a number of the Nabataean letters had become very similar in shape; but worse than that, Arabic had quite a few more consonant sounds than Aramaic. At first, both the miscellaneous sounds whose letters had merged in shape, and the group of similar sounds that had merged in Aramaic but been kept apart in Arabic, were simply written with the all-too-similar letters.

As is evident in Figure 1,[1] *bāʾ*, *tāʾ*, *yāʾ*, and *nūn* are indistinguishable; so are *rāʾ*, *dāl*, and the two examples of *ḏāl* (near the end of the first and

[1] The presentation of Bellamy's readings and interpretations does not constitute an endorsement of them.



تى نفس مر القيس بر عمرو ملك العرب [و]لقبه ذو أسد و[مـ]ذحج
وملك الاسدين وبهرو وملوكهم وهرب مـ⟨ذ⟩حجو عكدى وجا
يزجه فى حبج نجرن مدينت شمر وماك معدو وبيل بنبه
الشعوب ووكلهم لفرسو لروم فلم يبلغ ملك مبلغه
عكدى هلك سنت 223 يوم 7 بكسلول يلسعد ذو ولوه

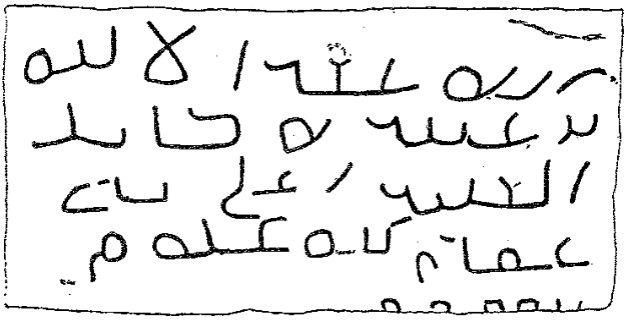
'(1) This is the funerary monument of Imru'u l-Qays, son of ʿAmr, king of the Arabs; and [?] his title of honor was Master of Asad and Maḏḥij. (2) And he subdued the Asadīs, and they were overwhelmed together with their kings, and he put to flight Ma⟨ḏ⟩ḥij thereafter, and came (3) driving them into the gates of Najrān, the city of Šammar, and he subdued Maʿadd, and he dealt gently with the nobles (4) of the tribes, and appointed them viceroys, and they became phylarchs for the Romans. And no king has equalled his achievements. (5) Thereafter he died in the year 223 on the 7th day of Kaslūl. Oh the good fortune of those who were his friends!'

(Bellamy 1985: 46)

Figure 1. The Namārah inscription (328 CE), interpretation by Bellamy (1985)

last lines). A considerable literature has addressed the question of why the two Arabic sibilants, *s* and *š*, were written with the same Nabataean letter, *šīn*, even though the other sibilant letter, *semkaṯ*, was available in the script (e.g. Macdonald 1986: 149–151, n. 123). These and other ambiguities in the script make possible highly divergent interpretations of the same inscription (Figure 2).

A few secular Arabic papyri have survived from the first years after the Hijra. They are very difficult to interpret, precisely because so many letters are so similar. But even in these very early documents, in a few cases, dots are found to distinguish letters. In fact, the oldest known one, from 22 AH (Grundler 1993: 157 P[apyrus]1), has some; though they are not used throughout the document, they are used in the same way as in the standard script, showing that the system was already fully in existence at that time. They are scarce over succeeding decades. But before the end of the second Islamic century, after some variety in how they were used, the consonant dots had



الله غفرا لاليه
بن عبيده كاتب
الخليد اعلى بنى
هـ من[ي]عمرى تنبه عل
يقروه

'(1) God, [grant] pardon to 'Ulaih, (2) the son of 'Ubaidah, the secretary (3) of al-'Ubaid, the chief of the Banū (4) 'Amr! May have notice of it he who (5) reads it!' (Littmann 1949)

برزه عقدا لاليه
بر عبيده كاتب
الجنيد اعلى ثانى
عمانى عته عته من
يمصحه

'(1) This (inscription) was set up by colleagues of 'Ulayh (2) son of 'Ubaydah, secretary (3) of the cohort Augusta Secunda (4) Philadelphiana; may he go mad who (5) effaces it.' (Bellamy 1988)

Figure 2. The ʾUmm al-Ǧimāl inscription (5th–6th c. CE) after Littmann (1949) and Bellamy (1988)

become settled, and obligatory, and were integral parts of the letters (as opposed to being 'diacritics'). The website Islamic-Awareness.org makes available good photos, drawings, and transcriptions of inscriptions (http://www.islamic-awareness.org/History/Islam/Inscriptions/) and manuscripts (http://www.islamic-awareness.org/Quran/Text/Mss/).

How were the dots assigned? As I see it, there are two different patterns to the dotting (Daniels 2000). The first kind of dotting simply marks off consonants whose letters had come to look the same or almost the same. These are ب *bāʾ*, ت *tāʾ*, ن *nūn*, and ي *yāʾ*; ح *ḥāʾ* and ج *ǧīm*; ر *rāʾ* and ز *zāy*; and ف *fāʾ* and ق *qāf*. (The conundrum of س *sīn* and ش *šīn* has already been

mentioned.) In each of these cases, one, two, or three dots were simply added over or under the connected or separate shape of the letter. Two more are differentiated by a stroke—ط *ṭāʾ* from ص *ṣād*, and ک *kāf* from the *bāʾ* group and ل *lām*. This seems like a normal and obvious solution to the problem of letters merging their shapes. It already existed in writing Syriac, where the letters ܕ *dālaṯ* and ܪ *rēš* as early as the later 2nd century CE can have a dot below or above respectively (Drijvers & Healey 1999). (Indeed such dots were taken as part of an argument that Arabic writing descended from Syriac rather than Nabataean [Starcky 1964, cols. 932–934], but there are many reasons why that argument has not prevailed [Grohmann 1971: 12–21; Daniels 2013: 420–422, § 18.4].)

But the Arabic script has six other dotted letters, letters representing consonants that did not survive in Aramaic—consonants in the ancestral language, what we call Proto-Semitic, that merged with others in Aramaic but remained distinct in Arabic. These are ث *ṯāʾ*, خ *ḫāʾ*, ذ *ḏāl*, ض *ḍād*, ظ *ḏ̣āʾ*, and غ *ġayn*. A common way of making new letters for new sounds (cf. Daniels 2006) is to take an existing letter for a similar sound, and make it slightly different: for instance, Russian Б [b] based on В [v] (Greek *beta*, which by the time of the creation of the Cyrillic alphabet was pronounced *vita*), or Щ [ʃtʃ] based on Ш [ʃ] (which is believed to come from Hebrew ש, in which the resemblance to Arabic س can still be seen). The way of making letters slightly different in Arabic was ready-made: adding dots.

The sounds of [f] and [θ] are acoustically very similar, and the sounds of [z] and [ð] are acoustically very similar, so it would make good sense if Arabic [θ] were written with a letter based on ف *f*, such as ڨ, or [ð] were written with a letter based on ز *z*, such as ژ. Instead, these consonants are written with variants of the letters that are *etymologically* related between Arabic and Aramaic. This seems to me to have a very profound implication: *someone* must have consciously made a comparison between Arabic and (Nabataean) Aramaic, and noticed that there were systematic correspondences: if an Arabic word contained a [θ], then the 'same' Aramaic word contained [t], as in *ṯawr*^{un}/*tawrā* 'bull'. If an Arabic word contained a [x], then the 'same' Aramaic word contained [ħ], as in *ʾaḫ*^{un}/*ʾaḥā* 'brother' (and so on).

But this is not reversible: some Aramaic words with [t] have [t] in the 'same' Arabic word; some Aramaic words with [ħ] have [ħ] in Arabic, as in (for both) *taḥta*/*tḥūt* 'under' (and so on). From the modern point of view, taking into account our knowledge of the other Semitic languages, we can say that this reflects the fact that Proto-Semitic must have had an inventory

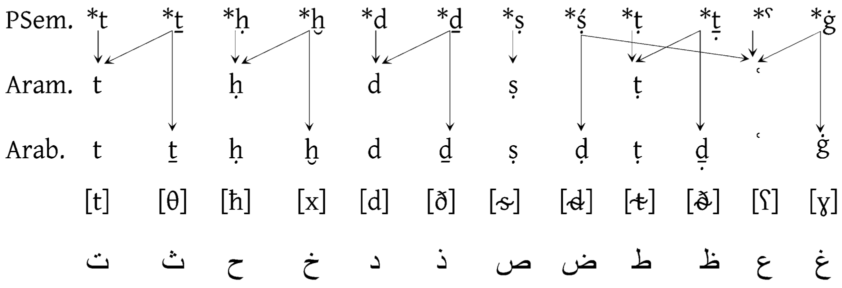


Figure 3. Etymological reflexes in Arabic script

of consonants that was larger than the set of consonants found in Aramaic. (Conventionally, an asterisk is placed before such 'reconstructed' items.) Over the centuries, in several Semitic languages, some of these consonants changed into similar consonants and became indistinguishable

This set of observations must have led to the decision to use the corresponding Aramaic letters as the basis for the new sounds that needed to be written to accurately represent the Arabic language. Thus ت *tāʾ* is the basis for ث *ṯāʾ*, ح *ḥāʾ* is the basis for خ *ḫāʾ*, and so on (Figure 3). This shows considerable sophistication and linguistic awareness at work at the beginning of or even before the Islamic era (cf. Diem 1979–1983).

However, by the time of the earliest fully dotted Qurʾān manuscripts, this window of linguistic opportunity must have closed, and the letters must have been taught as 28 separate items, without awareness of their history (Table 1). For, the grammar of Sībawayhi, the *Kitāb*, knows nothing of the origin of the dots. The *Kitāb* is the earliest surviving Arabic grammatical treatise and the foundation of Arab grammatical science. And Sībawayhi lived only until about 180 AH/796 CE, or perhaps a little later (Carter 2004). How do we know that Sībawayhi viewed the dots as unalterable parts of the letters? Because he has occasion to speak of 'subphonemic' phonetic variants of Arabic sounds. One of these sounds is *č* [ʧ]. He calls it *al-ǧīm allatī ka-š-šīn* (*Kitāb* II, 452.12) 'the *ǧīm* which is [pronounced] like the *šīn*'. (It was not difficult for him to *hear* this sound, because his native language was Persian, and the sound occurs in Persian.) But it does not occur to him to write the sound with, for example, چ—a symbol combining the letter shape of ج *ǧīm* with the dots of ش *šīn*.

The letter چ does, however, exist—for writing Persian. We have literally no idea when the Persian language was first written with Arabic script,

and no idea when the additional letters پ *p* گ *g* چ *č* ژ *ž* were created. The earliest surviving dated Perso-Arabic script manuscript was written in 1055 CE (Moritz 1913: 391). In this manuscript, all four letters are sometimes pointed with the three dots (گ < ڭ), but sometimes they are not.

The window of dotting opportunity, therefore, reopened at some point during the two and a half centuries between Sībawayhi's death and the date of this manuscript—and it has never closed since. By the time Islam was being carried beyond the areas of Arab conquest, Persian literature had blossomed, and, from the point of view of the history of writing, this was a good thing. For the Arabic language is missing a few consonants that are very common in languages of the world, including [p] and [g] (indicated by the empty dashed boxes in Table 1). Thus if Arabic alone had been taken around the world, Arabic script might not have been so readily adapted to so many other languages. But the Persian script showed both that it covered most of what any language needed, and that letters could be added as required, simply by adding dots to existing letters.

There is, however, a further complication. In addition to not having some common sounds, Arabic also has quite a few sounds that are not widespread among the world's languages, including the interdentals [θ] and [ð], the emphatics [s̴] [t̴] [d̴] [ð̴], and the laryngeals [ʕ] and [ħ] (indicated by the solid boxes in Table 1). And because, as is common in orthographies of the world, the spellings of borrowed words are retained in the borrowing language, the large number of words borrowed from Arabic are spelled with the Arabic letters for those sounds (in subsequent tables, registered as outline letters), even though the sounds themselves do not occur in the borrowing language, and the borrowed words are assimilated in pronunciation to the sounds of the language. That means that a number of simply-dotted letters that *might* have served for sounds in the borrowing language are simply not available.

The basic Arabic script thus provides a means of expansion to cover any language, but also some constraints on the precise form such expansions will take. Nowhere, interestingly, have any additional letter shapes (beyond existing calligraphic variants) been added to the basic inventory.

Note that I have never referred to the Arabic *alphabet*. That is because of my view of the history of writing (e.g., Daniels 2007). I call a script that notates only consonants an *abjad* (borrowing, in fact, an Arabic word). Arabic, to be sure, is not a perfect abjad. *ʾAlif* has become nothing but a long vowel letter (so that the ancestral glottal stop [ʔ] is written with *hamza*), and *wāw* and *yāʾ* are used for long vowels in addition to their

consonantal values. The marks for short vowels, long consonants, and a few morphophonemic phenomena are generally optional. Different languages have reacted differently to this state of affairs.

So let us now turn to how some classical languages have adopted and adapted the Arabic abjad. The only African languages for which I had information previously are three that, as far as I knew, are generally written only with adaptations of the Roman alphabet: Swahili, Hausa, and Fulani, so none of my examples come from Africa. The present volume provides information on the variety of strategies that have been used in Africa over the past two centuries: strikingly, vowel notation is often obligatory.

I have already hinted at my view that the ways of adding letters are not exactly arbitrary. To start with the simplest case, in Persian (Table 2) the one dot of voiced *b* ب is changed to the three dots of voiceless *p* پ; and the one dot of voiced *ǧ* ج to the three dots of voiceless *č* چ. That is, the change from one to three dots marks the change in the voicing feature. Similarly, if the line above *gāf* گ comes from three dots ڭ, as seems likely, then this three-dot group *also* marks a change in the voicing feature. And in *ž* ژ, the three dots could come from the palatal sibilant *šīn* ش.

The Turkic language Uyghur (Table 3)—pronounced [ujɣur], not [wigur]—uses both *gāf* گ and the three-dotted variant ڭ, which represents the velar nasal [ŋ]. (Uyghur-Arabic orthography is unique in dropping the Arabic-only letters, and spelling loanwords from Arabic as if they were ordinary Uyghur words.) The Iranian language Kurdish (Table 4), on the other hand, uses a digraph نگ for that velar nasal. Uyghur and Kurdish belong together, however, because both of them have developed means of notating all vowels—that is, they are actually alphabets. Uyghur (Table 5) uses the plain letter *wāw* for the vowel [o]—and therefore, unlike Persian, it does not use the plain *wāw* for [v]; instead, it uses ۋ *vāv* with three dots. Kurdish (Table 6), on the other hand, uses plain *wāw* for [w] (and also for the vowel [ʊ]), but for [v] it does not use ۋ with three dots, but rather ڤ with three dots. Just as we saw with Persian [b] and [p], changing one dot of ف [f] to three dots marks a reversing of the voicing feature.

With Pashto, the Iranian language of Afghanistan and Pakistan (Table 7), we find areal influence of Indic languages, necessitating two new columns in the chart: for retroflexes and assibilates. The retroflexes take a circle below the letter, or in two cases a dot above and below (an esthetic argument against the circle for *sīn* and *zāy* can be made). [ts] moves the three dots of [ʧ] from below to above; but [ʣ] cannot move the one dot of [ʤ] from

below to above, because *ḫā'* already exists in that form, so it takes a *hamza* above instead.

Moving to Indic languages themselves, the most widely written is the Urdu of Pakistan (Table 8). Here, the retroflexes are handled differently and more consistently—with a miniature ط above the letter. And aspiration of stops is marked by the eyeglass ـھ or initial shape of *hā'* هـ after the consonant letter; in an example of Arabic allography being promoted to distinctive status, the pointed shape of *hā'* ـہـ is used for the separate consonant [h].

With Sindhi (Table 9), however, the Arabic dotting system has been stretched beyond the breaking point. It goes to four dots for four of the aspirates ڦ *pʰ* ڀ *bʰ* ٿ *tʰ* ڇ *čʰ*, the postposed *hā'* for three of them ـجھ *jʰ* ـگھ *gʰ* ـڙھ *ṛʰ*—and other devices for the other four aspirates ٺ *ṭʰ* ک *kʰ* ڌ *dʰ* ڍ *ḍʰ*. For the implosives, two dots vertically serve in three of the four examples ٻ *ɓ* ڄ *ʄ* ڳ *ɠ*—but two dots vertically mark the retroflex aspirate ٺ *ṭʰ*, so ڏ *ɗ*. The other retroflexes again involve a miscellaneous set of devices ٽ *ṭ* ڊ *ḍ* ڻ *ṇ* ڙ *ṛ*.

Malay (Table 10) does not reflect the Persian heritage mostly seen so far: *p* is not پ but ڤ, which makes it possible for *ñ* to be ڽ—because the connected form is ـڽـ rather than ثـ, because ثـ is reserved for ث *ṯ*. This is thus the only variety of Arabic script where the shape of the bowl is distinctive: ڽ *ñ* versus ث *ṯ*.

I conclude this survey of adaptations of Arabic writing to other languages with an example that has not been used for nearly a century, and when it was used, literacy in it was very low—the Ottoman Turkish (Table 11). The interest here is not in the consonants; Turkish has a fairly simple inventory of consonants. But like any Turkic language, Turkish has a strict system of vowel harmony involving a cube of eight vowels. The three Arabic vowel points, *fatḥa*, *ḍamma*, and *kasra*, are clearly not adequate to notate these; so instead, the surplus of Arabic consonants is pressed into service so that words containing back vowels (to the right in the Table 11 inset) are written with *ṭā'*, *ḍād*, *ṣād*, *qāf*, and *ġayn*, and words containing front vowels (to the left) are written with *tā'*, *dal*, *sīn*, *kāf*, and *gāf* (though in both cases the pronunciations are simply [t d s k g] respectively).

The Arabic script has thus proved to be very flexible in representing the consonants and even the vowels of a considerable range of languages—many more than have been mentioned here—and this volume shows how it has been adapted to languages of Africa as well.

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Table 1. Arabic

		labial	interdental	dental	emphatic	palatal	velar	uvular	laryngeal	glottal
stop	vl.			ت	ط		ك	ق		ء
	vd.	ب		د	ض	ج				
fricative	vl.	ف	ث	س	ص	ش	خ		ح	ه
	vd.		ذ	ز	ظ		غ		ع	
nasal		م		ن						
glide		و		ر ل		ي				

Table 2. Persian

		labial		dental		palatal	velar	uvular		glottal
stop	vl.	پ		ت	ط	چ	ك	ق		ء
	vd.	ب		د	ض	ج	گ			
fricative	vl.	ف	ث	س	ص	ش	خ		ح	ه
	vd.	و	ذ	ز	ظ	ژ	غ		ع	
nasal		م		ن						
glide				رل		ي				

Table 3. Uyghur

		labial	dental	palatal	velar	glottal
stop	vl.	پ	ت	چ	ك	
	vd.	ب	د	ج	گ	
fricative	vl.	ف	س	ش	خ	ھ
	vd.	ۋ	ز	ژ	غ	
nasal		م	ن		ڭ	
glide			رل	ي		

Table 4. Kurdish

		labial		dental	emphatic	palatal	velar	uvular		glottal
stop	vl.	پ		ت	ط	چ	ك	ق		ء
	vd.	ب		د	ض	ج	گ			
fricative	vl.	ف	ث	س	ص	ش	خ		ح	ھ
	vd.	ڤ	ذ	ز	ظ	ژ	غ		ع	
nasal		م		ن			نگ			
glide		و		رل	ڕڵ	ي				

Table 5. Uyghur vowels

ى	ۈ	ۇ
ې	ۆ	و
	ە	ا
i	ü	u
e	ö	o
	ä	a

Table 6. Kurdish vowels

يى		ى		ي		وو
	ێ		ە		و	
		ا		ۆ		
i		ɨ		ɯ		u
	e		ə		ʊ	
		ɑ		o		

Table 7. Pashto

		labial		dental		retroflex	assibilate	palatal	velar		laryngeal	glottal
stop	vl.	پ		ت	ط	ټ	څ	چ	ك	ق		ء
	vd.	ب		د	ض	ډ	ځ	ج	ګ			
fricative	vl.	ف	ث	س	ص	ښ		ش	خ		ح	ه
	vd.		ذ	ز	ظ	ږ		ژ	غ		ع	
nasal		م		ن		ڼ						
glide		و		رل		ړ		ي				

Table 8. Urdu

		labial		dental		retroflex		palatal	velar	uvular		glottal
stop	vl.	پ		ت	ط	ٹ		چ	ك	ق		ء
	asp.	پھ		تھ		ٹھ		چھ	کھ			
	vd.	ب		د	ض	ڈ		ج	گ			
	asp.	بھ		دھ		ڈھ		جھ	گھ			
fricative	vl.	ف	ث	س	ص			ش	خ		ح	ہ
	vd.	و	ذ	ز	ظ			ژ	غ		ع	
nasal		م		ن								
glide				رل		ڑ		ي				
	asp.					ڑھ						

Table 9. Sindhi

		labial		dental		retroflex	palatal	velar			glottal
stop	vl.	پ		ت	ط	ٽ	چ	ڪ	ق		ء
	asp.	ڦ		ٿ		ٺ	ڇ	ک			
	vd.	ب		د	ض	ڊ	ج	گ			
	asp.	ڀ		ڌ		ڍ	جھ	گھ			
	implosive	ٻ		ڏ			ڄ	ڳ			
fricative	vl.	ف	ث	س	ص		ش	خ		ح	ھ
	vd.	و	ذ	ز	ظ			غ		ع	
nasal		م		ن		ڻ	ڃ	ڱ			
glide				رل		ڙ	ي				
	asp.					ڙھ					

Table 10. Malay

		labial		dental		palatal	velar			glottal
stop	vl.	ڤ		ت	ط	چ	ك	ق	ء	
	vd.	ب		د	ض	ج	ڬ			
fricative	vl.	ف	ث	س	ص	ش	غ		ح	ه
	vd.		ذ	ز	ظ		ڠ		ع	
nasal		م		ن		ڽ				
glide		و		ر ل		ي				

Table 11. Osmanli (Ottoman Turkish)

		labial		dental	palatal	velar		glottal
stop	vl.	پ			چ	ق, ك		ء
				ط, ت				
	vd.	ب		ض, د	ج	غ, گ		
fricative	vl.	ف	ث	ص, س	ش	خ	ح	ه
	vd.	و	ذ	ظ ز			ع	
nasal		م		ن	ڭ			
glide				ر ل	ي			

i	ü	ı	u
e	ö	a	o

THE ARABIC SCRIPT IN AFRICA: UNDERSTUDIED LITERACY*

Meikal Mumin

(North) Arabic script is a type of writing system which developed out of the Nabatean Aramaic script in the Middle East. The earliest inscriptions which have been found in Arabic script date from the 4th century CE (Bauer 1996: 559). This script has been used in other parts of the world, notably Africa and Asia, for the writing of indigenous languages. These orthographic traditons have become known by a number of names, such as *Kiarabu* among the Swahili, *Wolofal* among the Wolof, or *Wadaad's Writing* among the Somali. The term with the widest local use is certainly *Ajami* (and a number of varieties of the same term, such as *Äjäm* in Ethiopia, *Ajamiyya* among the Peul, *Anjemi* among the Yoruba), which originally denotes something like 'foreigners' speech or writing',[1] and this term has also gained some currency in academic research.

The present paper is a summary and overview of Arabic script as it is and has been used in Africa, as well as a history of its study. Unfortunately, there has been comparatively little scholarly research in this field, which is why it may be regarded as understudied literacy. In the following, I will first argue why Arabic script should be considered understudied in the first place, how this came about, and which implications it may have.

1. Africa: A Continent without Writing?

Traditional history books tell us that Africa used to be a continent largely without writing. Except for a few cases such as the Ethiopic script of the ancient Axumite kingdom or the Egyptian hieroglyphs of the ancient Egyptian kingdom, most languages only became written after the arrival of

* I thank Monika Feinen for producing the map for me. Any errors are my own.

[1] Historically this was an Arabocentric pejorative term similar to the Greek term *barbaroi*, which was "used by Arabs conscious of their political and social superiority in early Islam"; it is etymologically related to *ʾaʿǧama* 'to speak indistinctly, to mumble' (Bosworth 1985).

European colonialists. In earlier times, this led to the view that Africa was an a-historic continent. As Philips (2006: 39) points out, this earlier view has since been refuted:

> The claim that Africa has no history because so much of its past was not documented in writing is an artifact of colonialism and a misrepresentation of both history and Africa.

Particularly in the 20th century, different scientific disciplines, such as (historical) linguistics, ethnology, or archeology, have begun reconstructing the history of Africa in the claimed absence of written testimonies.

Additionally, there have been more discoveries of writing practices in Africa, which demonstrated that Africa was not as devoid of writing as previously believed. Besides indigenous African scripts, such as the Mende, Vai, or Tifinagh scripts,[2] in different areas of Africa more and more adaptations of Arabic script for the writing of indigenous African languages have been discovered. Mostly, these adaptations came about with the diffusion and increasing influence of Islam in Africa. Arabic script is and has been the only supra-regional script in Africa besides Roman/Latin script, which it predates by more than 500 years.

In most sub-Saharan areas,[3] European colonization reduced Arabic to being a classical language, reserved for religious purposes, while Arabic became a mother tongue or *lingua franca* in a few areas beyond the Maghreb, such as Sudan or Chad. Previously, Arabic had spread quite successfully as a classical language or a language of special status, used in very restricted situations, mostly business and official correspondence: a *lingua franca* of politics and business and a classical language for the study of Islam and a gateway to Islamic science. Proficiency in the Arabic language also enabled Africans to pick up knowledge of Arabic literacy, a skill which they went on to apply to other indigenous languages beyond Arabic. Thus, many African languages were at some point written in Arabic script and since the promotion of Roman/Latin based script in European colonial times, a competition between scripts developed, which in some countries still is an ongoing process.

Arabic script was originally developed for the writing of the Arabic language, which at the same time has always served as the pedagogical frame of reference for the study and teaching of Arabic script in the Muslim world.

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[2] For more information on these, see Dalby (1968, 1969).

[3] There may be other cases: Ferguson (1970) claims, for instance, that Arabic was more widely used in Ethiopia, although Drewes (2007) disagrees with this view.

Originally, the use of Arabic script was limited to the expression of the linguistic features of the Arabic language. Each time it came to be used for the writing of another language, it had to be adapted in some fashion to reflect the linguistically distinctive features of that language, becoming an orthography. Unlike the case of the Latin/Roman script,[4] there have not been any institutions coordinating the process of adapting Arabic script to African languages (at least before the late 20th century CE; see Chtatou 1992). Accordingly, many Arabic-script-based orthographic traditions have developed rather independently, yielding a wide range of degrees of adaptation as well as of choices and methods of orthographic representation. From a grammatological point of view (Gelb 1952), such orthographies may seem much more diverse than Roman/Latin based ones. It seems that most of these orthographies have never been standardized (a concept which has been generally defined for languages, not for writing[5]), and accordingly, a high degree of idosyncracy on the part of the writer, as well as the reader, is to be expected.

To scholars dealing with Africa, the usage of Arabic script for the purpose of writing indigenous African languages is not something entirely new. However, only a few cases are well known and have received attention, such as Hausa, Swahili, or maybe Fulfulde. Generally, though, such writing traditions have been perceived as occasional, regional, or isolated phenomena. This, it would seem, is not the case.

1.2. *The Distribution of Arabic Script in Africa*

A more thorough study of Arabic script usage in Africa reveals a wide usage, both temporarily and spatially. While orthography creation for African languages in Latin/Roman script started largely during the 19th century (Bendor-Samuel 1996), the oldest examples of Arabic script usage from Africa might very well be those of Old Tashelhit or Medieval Berber, which are dated to the 10th to 14th century (van den Boogert 2000: 357), while the development possibly even occurred in the 9th or 8th century (van den

[4] For more information on the process of adapting the Latin/Roman script in Africa, see Dalby (1986), Bendor-Samuel (1996).

[5] Ferguson (1971: 224) defines the socio-linguistic concept of standardization as "[…] the process of one variety of a language becoming widely accepted throughout the speech community as a supradialectal norm—the 'best' form of the language—rated above regional and social dialects, although these may be felt appropriate in some domains". Note that Ferguson speaks about spoken language only, not about writing, which is implicitly regarded by him as adhering to the norms of spoken language.

Boogert 2000: 372).[6] Map 1 below provides the approximate geographical location of those language areas, where there is attested or possible, past or present, usage of Arabic script. Sources are listed in Appendices 1–3.

We have attested usage for eighty languages.[7] A look at the geographical spread of the use of Arabic script in Africa reveals wide distribution in all areas of Africa, with significant usage in West (30) and East Africa (30), a more significant usage in North (9) and South Africa (7), and minor usage in Central Africa (4). Arabic script is the only supra-regional script next to Roman/Latin script. 'Attested' in this context means that there are either full or partial descriptions, or clear and non-conflicting verifiable statements (published works or personal communication (p.c.) by fellow researchers) on the past or present usage of Arabic script for one of these languages.

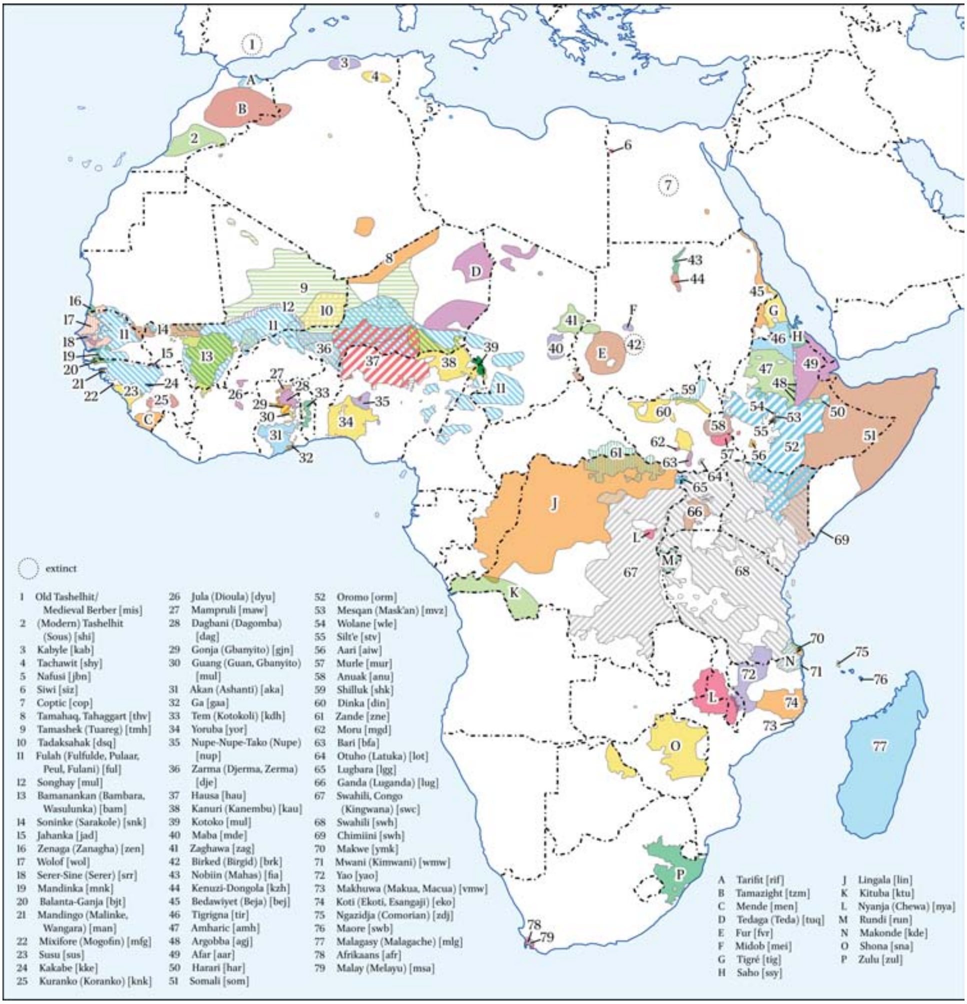
Furthermore, we have fifteen more possible cases suggestive of past or present usage of Arabic script for the writing of these languages. The geographical spread shows a significant number of cases in East Africa (7), (surprisingly) a more significant number of cases in Central Africa (4), as well as an insignificant number of cases in North (2), West (1), and South Africa (1). 'Possible' in this context means, that we have inconclusive evidence, such as conflicting statements from different researchers, or evidence from non-verifiable sources only (such as Wikipedia), or unclear statements (such as '… is written in Arabic …').

In sum, there are at least eighty indigenous African writing traditions and up to ninety-five or more indigenous African writing traditions, which belong to a major writing tradition attested to all over the continent. In the face of such numbers, the statement that Africa was a continent without writing should be rectified; accordingly, Philips' view that Africa does have history despite a lack of written sources still seems to be an understatement.

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[6] Van den Boogert (2000: 371) argues that the orthography for Old Tashelhit was probably created in al-Andalus, the Arabic name for the Iberian peninsula between the 8th and the 15th century. Since al-Andalus was a centre of power and education, with universities like those of Cordova and Granada, people from Northern Africa migrated between Iberia and the Maghreb. Van den Boogert calls this language Old Tashelhit since its lexicon and morphology seem closest to Tashelhit (van den Boogert 2000: 370), a Berber language of Northern Africa. Furthermore, van den Boogert clearly states that a number of these manuscripts were written in the Maghreb. Therefore, although this orthography was probably created in southern Spain, the language and its authors and readers were most probably African.

[7] Varieties of Arabic as well as European colonial languages have not been included. Among these languages, there is one, Malay, whose use was restricted to a significant immigrant community in South Africa (see Haron and Versteegh, this volume).



Map 1: Languages in Africa for which Arabic script usage is attested or possible[8]

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[8] Three-letter codes in square brackets indicate ISO 639–3 language identifiers. [mul] indicates a glottonym representing multiple language within this classification. Languages with attested usage are indexed by Roman numerals, and languages with possible usage are indexed by capital Roman letters. Geographic positioning of languages follows Lewis (2009) where no specific data on geographical spread of the Arabic script use was available (which is certainly the default). I am aware of the issues of representing unspecific data in a specific manner, but I believe the advantages of graphical representation outweigh the disadvantages and possible fallacies in interpretation.

2.1. *African Illiteracy: The Existential Bias*

Africa is not a continent without writing. Rather, it is a continent without studies on writing. Why is this the case? Some linguists perceive the study of writing systems as a cultural field of research, while students of ethnology regard it as a linguistic subject. As a result, the study of the use of Arabic script in Africa has been neglected.

Since the beginning of modern grammatology with the works of Ignace Gelb (1952) in the 1950s, recent years have seen much more positive and unbiased approaches to writing systems, such as the work by Daniels & Bright (1996). Henry Rogers was right, though, to point out that writing systems, particularly in earlier times, have often been subjected to ethnocentric bias just as well.

> The study of writing systems is as subject to ethnocentric bias as most work in cultural areas. Titles like *Our Glorious Alphabet* are somewhat extreme, but at a more subtle level, there is no lack of articles extolling the virtues of a particular writing system, articles which happen to be written by speakers of that language. Obviously such work must not be arbitrarily discounted, but it must be used with care. (Rogers 1995: 32)

In the following, I will show that the description and analysis of Arabic script was dominated, if not overshadowed by ethnocentric bias, resulting in the devaluation of writing systems and orthographies based on Arabic script, knowingly or unknowingly, in what Nikolay Dobronravin (1997) has called "[…] a land of 'scientific' (in fact, Euro-centric) criticism […]".

Different scholars dealing with Arabic-script writing traditions of Africa have independently noticed the biased perspective, which earlier scholars had taken. Maurice Delafosse (1870–1926), who served as a colonial officer in Africa and wrote major works on West Africa, has possibly influenced the opinion of a large share if not the entire French academic tradition towards the study of Arabic script, as noted by Vydrin (1998: 1–2). Delafosse (1904: 259, cited by Vydrin 1989: 1–2) categorically denied the very existence of these writing systems for West African languages, saying that "[…] les musulmans de l'Afrique Occidentale ne se servent pas des caractères arabes pour écrire les langues indigènes".[9] Similarly, Robinson (1982: 251) pointed out Delafosse's "rather negative position on the value of this material". This lack of recognition of Arabic script and orthographies based on it is still present in more recent works, such as *Alphabets of Africa* (Hartell 1993), which,

[9] "… the Muslims of West Africa do not make use of Arabic characters to write the indigenous languages".

despite the inclusiveness of its title, fails to represent even one orthography based on Arabic script. Hartell (1993: 269) reproduces Sudanese Arabic in Roman/Latin script, conceding that it is "[n]ormalement écrit en écriture standard d'arabe, mais le Nouveau Testament est publié en écriture romain, et les deux autres transcriptions sont utilisées dans l'enseignement".[10]

If the existence of such writing systems was realized, or due to overwhelming evidence had to be recognized, they were often equated with illiteracy:

> On numerous occasions, particularly in Africa and the USSR, literacy based on the use of an Ajamic script, and even literacy in Arabic, was officially equated with illiteracy. Any non-Latin (or non-Cyrillic) written forms of a single language were disregarded as accidental or non-scientific.
>
> (Dobronravin 1997: 96)

Although official language policies do not necessarily reflect academic views, in the case of Arabic script they have certainly supported the existential bias implemented by different language policies all over the world.

Even when such writing practices were recognized and not equated with illiteracy, texts written in these orthographies were often devalued. Van den Boogert (1997: 38) gives as an example the case of Henri Basset, a well-known Berberologist of the early 20th century, who "[…] had a very low opinion of the value, artistic and otherwise, of the written texts from the Sous, and his opinion may have had some influence on later generations of researchers". This view, as van den Boogert (1997: 44–47) aptly observes, was caused by a misunderstanding of the function of rhyme in Sous Berber texts caused by the Eurocentric view of rhyme as an aesthetic feature of lyrical works only, while in the local context of this literary tradition, rhyme is a functional rather than an aesthetic means, facilitating easier memorization of texts. Consequently,

> […] after reading only a very small number of manuscript texts Basset dismissed as uninteresting any other texts that might have existed once: 'Et si elles existèrent jamais, devons-nous en déplorer la perte comme un malheur? La lecture de ce qui nous reste est bien faite pour diminuer nos regrets'.[11]
>
> (van den Boogert 1997: 44–46)

Therefore, Basset dimissed an entire literary tradition, due to a Eurocentric and biased perspective, and just as in the case of Delafosse and West African

[10] "Normally written in Arabic script, but the New Testament has been published in Roman script and the two other transcriptions are used in teaching".

[11] "And if they never existed, must we grieve their loss as a misfortune? The reading of that which is left to us is well suited to diminish our regrets".

languages, he may well have influenced generations of researchers with this bias.

Finally, some researchers have argued that the small volume of documents produced (or rather, discovered) and the orthographical incoherence due to the high degree of idiosyncracy, do not justify speaking of writing practices. This leads to the question of how many writers or readers constitute a writing tradition? Certainly, this question cannot be answered categorically. The apparent degree of idosyncracy in orthographies needs to be studied again within, not outside, the context of its use, taking into consideration not only intelligibility, but also pragmatic or functional aspects.

2.2. *Arabic Literature or Islamic Writings? The Religious Bias*

Similar Eurocentric conceptions seem to apply not only to the style but also to the contents of these texts, which are usually characterized as religious in nature. In numerous cases it has been contended that all texts written in Arabic script are Islamic, i.e. of a religious nature, as pointed out by Shariff (1991: 42–43) for the case of Swahili:

> Swahili literature is entirely Islamic from its inception in 1728 until the advent of German administration in 1884. And even after that, up till present day [...]. (Knappert 1971: 5)

This is also evident in the terminology. Often, Arabic-based script and orthographies or literary traditions written in them are termed Islamic literature, Islamic writings, or Arabic literature. Such denominations underspecify, since Arabic literature would encompass any text written in Arabic language and/or script and Islamic literature or writings any text featuring an Islamic content and/or context. Certainly, most Arabic-script-based orthographies came about with a specific purpose, namely to educate the population in Islam. This pedagogical purpose is noted by several researchers and often voiced in a straightforward manner by authors of such texts, like Tierno Mouhammadou Samba Mombéyâ in the case of Fulfulde:

> J' expliquerai les dogmes en langue peule
> Pour t' en faciliter la compréhension; en les entendant, accepte-les.
> À chacun, en effet, sa langue seule lui permet
> De comprendre ce que disent les Originaux.
> Nombreux, parmi les Peuls, doutent de ce qu' ils lisent
> En arabe et demeurent ainsi dans l' incertitude[12] (Sow 1966: 15)

[12] "I will explain the dogmas in the Peul language
to facilitate their understanding to you; upon hearing them, accept them.

Yet the general assumption that all such texts are Islamic is challenged more and more by researchers, particular local ones, due to newer discoveries of secular texts. While Luffin (this volume) exemplifies secular use for Swahili, Hayward (1981: 555) stresses that there was secular literature in the case of Oromo, as does Ngom (2005: 17) for Wolof, and Gutelius for Tamashek (2000: 6). One of the reasons for this misconception is probably a dual systemic bias.

Firstly, local scribes attached higher value to religious texts. Discussing Swahili, Shariff (1991: 42) argues that secular poetry usually vanished together with the temporal context it was created for, and that there was no cultural incentive to preserve it, as in the case of religious poetry. He goes on to conclude that, "[...] the Swahili have created at least as many secular poems as religious ones [...] but this balance is not reflected in the collections" (Shariff 1991: 44). Certainly, this is speculative in nature, but other scholars have speculated that all over Africa much more remains to be discovered (Knappert 1996: 164; O'Fahey 2008: 334), while yet others remain sceptical (Klaus Wedekind p.c. 17.08.2009, speaking of Beja). Without proper surveys, we will certainly never know.

Secondly, there was another systemic bias in Western academic traditions, as Western scholars "have concentrated on the written religious aspects" (Shariff 1991: 53) in their documentation of such writing traditions. Certainly, the fact that a large number of Africanists traditionally have been Christian missionaries must have played a role, and we are dealing with another case of Orientalism in Said's terms (Said 1978).

But, beyond the rather obvious cultural bias, there has been a more important lack of clear analytical division between content or context. For Islamic societies, Islam is part of society, and vice versa. Islam forms the natural source of inspiration, cultural heritage and common framework of reference, just as Christianity is deeply embedded in European culture. Accordingly, although there are basically no texts which do not employ Islam as context, they are not religious by conception. As Clarissa Vierke (p.c. 2008) puts it,

> Eigentlich muss man eher andersrum sagen: es gibt fast keinen Text, in dem nicht ein Bezug zum Islam vorkommt, aber viele (wenn nicht die meisten),

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Everybody should know, indeed, that only one's language allows one
To understand what the originals say.
Many are those among the Peuls who have doubts about what they read
in Arabic and remain in their uncertainty"

> [… sind] nicht religiös […] in dem Sinne, dass sie Teil eines Rituals sind oder eine besondere religiöse Kraft haben. Die Trennung weltlich-religiös ist eine sehr westliche, die für viele afrikanische Kontexte nicht so einfach übernommen werden kann.[13]

2.3. *Optimal Orthographies? The Linguistic Bias*

Before the modernization of grammatology from the 1960s onwards, linguists have generally exhibited a sceptical attitude towards Arabic-based scripts. Most often, the principal ability of Arabic script to represent languages other than Arabic was doubted, since it was claimed that "its letters could not convey the genuine Turkic, Chinese or African sounds" (Dobronravin 1997: 95). More specifically, linguists have usually argued that Arabic script lacks representational features for vowels and tones,[14] and that it deviates from the supposedly ideal phonemic principle of representation (Rogers 1995: 33). Leaving aside the validity (and relevance) of such arguments on strictly linguistic grounds, I will argue that such views seem to relate more to double standards and a biased view, rather than reason, as "[… l]inguistic Eurocentrism can also be *orthographic*" (Mazrui & Mazrui 1998: 45).

One such case is summarized by Robinson (1982), concerning the comparatively well-known Arabic-based orthography of Fulfulde, the substance and legitimacy of which was doubted by Delafosse (see above):

> Scholars of the West African savanna have long been familar with the use of the Arabic alphabet to create *ʿajami* or "non-Arabic" literatures in Fulfulde and Hausa. Maurice Delafosse took a rather negative position on the value of this material, basing his opinion on two formidable obstacles: the absence of natural correspondence between a Semitic alphabet and non-Semitic phonemes and the difficulty of establishing a unified system of of [sic] conventions where such a natural correspondence was lacking. He argued that the ajamiyya manuscripts were few in number, poor in quality, and did not deserve the name of literature. By contrast, several more recent authors have stressed the importance and the continuing composition in ajamiyya […]. (Robinson 1982: 251)

[13] "Rather, one should say it the other way around: there is basically no text without a reference to Islam, but many (if not most) [… are] not religious in the sense that they form part of a ritual or carry religious powers. The division secular vs. religious is a very Western one, which cannot be applied that easily to many African contexts".

[14] Concerning tone, Bondarev (this volume) demonstrates that in the case of Kanuri, tone marking is possible in Arabic-based script and, therefore, that this misconception is not even reflected in the data available.

Delafosse's critical view is representative of the general attitudes towards non-Roman/Latin script in general (cf. DeFrancis 1984, 1989 on Chinese script) and Arabic script in particular. While traditional research into writing systems has dealt mostly with applying Roman/Latin script to languages, particularly in the colonial context,[15] more recent years have seen the development of descriptive research on reading and writing from a (neuro-)linguistic point of view. With respect to reading, though, "a large proportion of the research [...] has been done on European languages and on Japanese [...]. Undoubtedly, this non-random selection of languages has not given us a true picture of reading" (Rogers 1995: 32). Accordingly, Rogers (1995: 31) concedes:

> Despite any assumption that a particular writing system may be better or worse for a particular language, it should be pointed out that probably any writing system could be made to work for any language.

Taking the case of tone as example, the discourse in the African context was guided rather by "[a]mple anecdotal evidence", as Steven Bird (1999: 2) puts it in his critical review of orthographies for African tone languages, based on experimental research testing reading performance for the West African language Dschang. Traditionally, explicit tonal marking has been seen as the ultimate aim by several scholars, for instance by Tucker (1964: 10), who states: "Everybody, I think, would agree that tone marks or tone indication should be an integral part in dictionaries".

Note that this statement follows a 16-page discussion of the difficulty of Roman/Latin script tone marking systems, in which he notes (1964: 606):

> As tone-marking becomes more and more conventional, however, the number of 'rules' to be observed by the reader multiplies, till a time comes when the average reader cannot be expected to remember them all.

This may in fact be lined to the historical development of African linguistics, where tone as such was mostly realized at an analytically later stage and considered a suprasegmental layer of the language (Tucker 1964: 610);[16] this was reflected in the orthographies as well:

> Consequently the tonal conventions, when applied at all, came to be superimposed on the by now existing orthographic systems as a kind of afterthought, and were allotted what odd marks and diacritics the printer could spare.

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15 For an overview, see Bendor-Samuel (1996)

16 This raises the question of whether the linguistic definition of tone as a supra-segmental feature of languages, i.e. an additional, non-basic, layer, might have affected the analysis of such languages.

This analysis was reflected in tone not being a priority in the creation of orthographies, which put more effort into accurately representing other phonological features of languages. Besides this analytical problem, the fact remains that native speakers often do not require tonal marking in orthographies, deducing these features by pragmatics and context using their instincts. In fact, Tucker (1964: 610) himself notes that in orthography creation for mother tongue speakers, tone is often left out:

> Dr. G. Innes, for example, in A Mende grammar (London, Macmillan, 1962), discusses tone fully in his introductory chapter, but introduces tonal discussion into his subsequent chapters only when he considers it grammatically important. This is because his book is intended primarily for Mende-speaking children, who can read his texts perfectly well without the aid of tone marks. […] Where vernacular literature is concerned, e.g. in books or newspapers, and in letter-writing, the need for tone marks is rarely expressed.

In the end, it seems linguistic academic discourse on Arabic scripts and possibly on orthography creation has been dealing in double standards. Due to the systemic bias of much of the research on this topic, scripts were discussed from a theoretical and unilateral point of view. This point of view is somewhat reminiscent of the strong purist, prescriptive traditions of language maintenance, prevalent in the assembly of nations that constituted Europe, which have always been conservative in their orthography, for example in English. Meanwhile, the creation of scripts for the benefit of mother-tongue speakers silently took a much more pragmatic approach. In the process, non-Roman/Latin scripts were usually discarded as incapable of representing other languages, on the basis of a claimed lack of certain representational features. Yet, when orthographies were created for speakers, rather than learners, these very same features were often not expressed. One case that springs to mind is the non-marking of lexical stress in orthographies for languages such as German or English. In these languages, lexical stress is an inherent property of lexemes and serves to form minimal pairs, just as tone does for tone languages. The orthographies of these languages do not mark lexical stress, yet, no one ever doubted the basic capability of Roman/Latin script to express them in writing.

The 'otherness' of features such as lexical and grammatical tone, mostly encountered in Africa and South-East Asia (Maddieson 2011), may also have contributed to the feeling that these needed to be represented in orthographies, despite the fact that, generally speaking, it is at least questionable whether mother-tongue speakers require orthographic representation of such features. Accordingly, grammatological grounds on which Arabic-based scripts for African language in particular have been criticized, seem

to be based on a double standard, bearing little significance for real world reading and writing practices. The fact that Arabic script has been put to use for hundreds of years in dozens of languages in Africa is a case in point.

3. What Are the Consequences of Arabic Script Being 'Understudied' for Africa?

After this summary of the reasons why Arabic script should be considered to be understudied, and how this was manifested, the question remains of whether and how it is relevant to African studies and, more importantly, Africa itself. Next to a competition between scripts, there is a much bigger competition of languages in Africa, as Africa is one of the linguistically densest regions of the world, with the Ethnologue (2009) giving a figure of 2,110 languages spoken in Africa today. This linguistic density stands in contrast to the statistically low literacy rates in Africa (62.5% literacy for Sub-Saharan Africa, and 67.3% for North Africa in 2008—the second and fourth lowest rates by continent; UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2008: 2).

> Approximately one third of the world's languages are spoken in Africa. Of these two thousand or so distinct languages, over five hundred now have a written form, the vast majority using a Roman-based orthography.
> (Bendor-Samuel 1996: 689)

Taken from a positive stance, Bendor-Samuel's statement could be read as implying that vast advances have been made in the field of literacy in Africa. Yet, the vast majority of African languages are not used as a medium of instruction, and colonial languages continue to dominate the realm of education. This has also resulted in inclusion of the achievement of Universal Primary Education (http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/education.shtml, 28.08.2011) as a second goal in the UN Millenium Development Goals. To this end, national and supra-national language policy is supported by academic research, as manifested by the persistent calls for the strengthening of indigenous language, and in particular, for mother tongue education in Africa. It is also evidenced by the strong intertwining of language documentation and language strengthening, as in the Hans Rausing Endangered Languages Project or in the Volkswagen Foundation's Dokumentation Bedrohter Sprachen programme, which fund and advocate the documentation of endangered languages, including local language maintenance and revival (http://www.hrelp.org/languages/, August 28, 2011). Particularly in connection with language documentation, it has been argued that the competition of languages in Africa, which often leads to a switch of language

for entire speaker communities and, as a consequence, to language death, is intimately related to literacy. Literacy 'empowers' language communities by offering new perspectives for languages. Turning Bendor-Samuel's statement around, we understand that only about a quarter of all African languages possess an orthography, and the other three quarters of African languages which have supposedly not developed any orthography are certainly all the more endangered.

> The development of an orthography and the promotion of the written use of a language are two cornerstones of language planning […] and therefore extremely relevant for endangered languages, where every single measure increasing the prestige and scope of the language is important. If an easily adaptable written tradition and a degree of literacy in a different language among the population were present, this would be a huge advantage for the empowerment of the language in question. (Lüpke 2004: 90)

Unfortunately, African orthographies are widely believed to have developed only through the work of colonialists and especially Christian missionaries. Remembering the existential bias demonstrated above, we find that this continues to be a dominant reality in many African states today. Users of Arabic script only[17] are officially considered illiterate, for instance in Ethiopia (Kemal Abdulwehab p.c. 2011), or in Senegambia, where "[…] local Ajami users [are …] often mistakenly considered illiterate, because they are illiterate in French […]" (Ngom 2004: 13; see Ngom 2005: 17). This is also confirmed by Friederike Lüpke for West Africa in general. She points out that UNESCO statistics, being assembled on the basis of statistics of different countries, ultimately do not recognize "literacies […] in vernacular languages and non-Roman scripts" (Lüpke 2004: 93–94).

Considering the demonstrably significant use of Arabic script in Africa, the question should be raised, how valid such statistics actually are. Taking the example of the Senegalese province of Diourbel, Friedericke Lüpke has demonstrated that statistics do not exemplify or even reflect reality, but disguise it: "[…] Diourbel appears at the bottom of the list […]" of nation-wide statistics on literacy "[…] since only formal schooling and resulting literacy in Latin characters is counted". This stands in stark contrast to the fact that Diourbel "[…] has the densest network of Koranic schools and the highest literacy rate in Arabic script […]" (Lüpke 2004: 98).

[17] In numerous cases, users are multi-graphic, using multiple writing systems to write one or multiple languages.

Arabic script use in Africa must be considered within this context. Due to the lack of surveys and reliable data on Arabic script in Africa, evaluating its contemporary role, i.e. its impact on literacy, is rather difficult.

> The unsatisfying position of having to rely on quasi-anecdotal findings like this, instead of being able to call on verifiable data collected at the national and international levels, illustrates the vicious circle resulting from ignoring or minimising this writing culture—what is not officially recognised doesn't inform any policies; what doesn't inform educational policies is not taken into consideration. (Lüpke 2004: 98)

There is, therefore, good reason to assume that the impact of Arabic script, as well as its spread is more significant than hitherto assumed. As mentioned above, historically Arabic script usage came about through contact with Islam and spread of Arabic as a lingua franca. While Arabic script played a pedagogical role in the education in Islamic knowledge, Arabic language enabled access to an entire world of (pre-modern) Islamic sciences. This access was highly valued, and therefore, teaching and learning of Arabic script were institutionalized in Africa, just like in other regions where Muslims were present, in the form of Islamic educational systems, also known as Qur'anic schools or *madrasa*s.[18] Despite an overwhelming promotion of Roman/Latin script orthographies since (Western) colonial times (Bendor-Samuel 1996)—which is why Islamic educational systems have been justly called "informal educational systems" (McLaughlin 2009: 184)—and despite a lack of recognition even today, both Arabic script and Islamic educational systems have certainly proven to be resilient. Not surprisingly, the latter have been subjected to a very narrow and culturally biased academic discussion:

> A great deal of work has been carried out on Quranic education in Africa; yet, much of this has concerned the training of those who become teachers or scholars in their own right, a group that makes up less than ten percent of the total student population. This understandable focus on the achievements of the superior students has distracted attention from the impact of Quranic education on the majority of the people who pass through it—rather as if one were to attempt to describe the American education system by a study of the graduates of Harvard and Yale universities only. Islamic learning must be understood beyond this scope […] (Konneh 1995: 48–49)

Therefore, the impact of Islamic educational systems was surely higher than previously thought; these systems have produced a restricted literacy for

[18] For more information, see Daun (1983, 1992).

hundreds of years as a side effect. Although the methods of learning and curricula are usually far from 'modern', there is one significant indirect achievement: literacy in one's native language—an achievement which the vast majority of African countries have failed to achieve due to various reasons.

Thus, Arabic-based script and the Islamic educational systems offer the possibility to significantly increase the literacy rates and number of schooled pupils. There are a couple of benefitting factors to this prospect. Firstly, these systems usually have a wide acceptance. They are culturally rooted and are mostly not perceived as foreign. It is even doubtful that they are perceived as Islamic, i.e. religious, in countries such as Senegal. Secondly, the tuition fees are also significantly lower, thereby enabling schooling for children of poorer families. Thirdly, they are often widely distributed all across countries. Islamic schools can be found in different, mostly rural, environments, where Western education systems are not established, as Augustine Konneh (1995: 48) asserts for Liberia, where "[…] Arabic literacy constitutes a major alternative to English education—and in some areas Islamic schools provide the major form of literacy training". Fourthly, in some cases, such school forms have even brought a certain level of education to women, who often did not enjoy either economic or educational upward mobility (cf. Daun 1992: 193). This may be an infrequent phenomenon, and it is certainly the least documented aspect. Note however that McLaughlin (2009: 180) speaks about the attendance of both boys and girls in Qur'anic schools. In the case of Brava, Somalia, and Chimiini, the majority of teachers have traditionally been women (Banafunzi 1996: 336), and some members of society have speculated in interviews about near-total literacy rates—unfortunately, before the introduction of non-indigenous schooling systems.

There has been a long-standing discussion particularly among African thinkers and academics, on how to strengthen local languages, Often, different major languages of Africa have been suggested to replace European languages as lingua francae, such as Swahili. The most recent off-spring of such endeavors was the identification of twelve vehicular cross-border languages (VXBLs), which ACALAN has identified to be prioritized for promotion towards the status of official languages (Alexander, in preparation: 4). Within the present discussion, it is interesting to note that ten out of these twelve languages (or language clusters) used Arabic script in the past, or still do so, which obviously has never been recognized. Yet, when discussing intentions of the African Union to adopt "orthographically harmonised versions of these vehicular cross-border languages as working languages" (Alexander, in preparation: 5), it is assumed that such orthographical har-

monization could only take place on the basis of Latin/Roman script. Not only might pluralism in the African religiously highly diverse societies be a better strategy for achieving any success in strengthening African languages, there is also the fact that there are established Islamic educational systems in place, which obviously employ Arabic script, while the vast majority of 'modern', i.e. Western educational systems, in which the language of instruction continues to be French or English, even at the lowest levels of education, employ Latin/Roman script.

As in the case of Arabic-based scripts, the Islamic educational systems are not taken into account in official statistics. Just as literacy in Arabic-script-based orthographies is considered illiteracy, Islamic schooling "[…] is not considered as formal education by the government […]", as demonstrated by the case of Mali, where "[…] the responsibility for institutions of traditional Islamic education does not fall under the Ministry of Education, but together with the mosques under the Ministry of Interior" (Bouwman 2005: 14). Few African states seem to have started to acknowledge these systems, and if they do so, it is usually with the intention of suppressing them. Such is the case in a number of West African states, which accepted the so-called *écoles franco-arabes*, or Franco-Arabic schools, as part of the official school structure. This was in line with the French colonial language policies, which from 1906 to 1957 supported "Koranic schools that taught French next to Arabic" (Bouwman 2005: 12). After becoming independent, Mali, adopted this idea again and established the *écoles franco-arabes* from 1962 onwards. Both the French and the Malian government imitated the very successful local Islamic educative systems as they sought to control them, since they were unable to halt their constant growth (Bouwman 2005: 12–13). This has resulted in two parallel educational systems, of which the traditional one remains much more significant (Bouwman 2005: 13).

The official language politics of African states are largely regarded as unsuccessful, possibly since they continued along the lines of colonial language policies. Yet, the private Islamic educational systems meanwhile continued to flourish. In Senegal, the attendance of Qurʾanic schools, called *daara*, "[…] is the norm for both boys and girls, and most people are introduced to the Arabic language and writing system in this way" (McLaughlin 2009: 180). These schools have become increasingly popular, and seem to be undergoing a process of modernization. New private schools have come up, offering bilingual curricula, which include both secular and religious aspects. These private schools have also attracted external funding from Islamic donors (McLaughlin 2009: 185). Despite suppression by the government, in Liberia, too, Islamic education systems were able to expand

their operations and modernize their curricula to offer a synthesis of Western and Islamic education, securing private funding, which certainly relates to the wide acceptance and success of these educational system. They are now striving for formalization to obtain official state recognition and support (Konneh 1995: 55–56). These educational systems are widespread, well accessible, culturally rooted and they seem to be modernizing themselves. Furthermore, they are *de facto* becoming more and more integrated into contemporary official African educational systems.

4. Conclusions

The success and prevalence of the Islamic educational systems in Africa is intimately connected to the use of Arabic script usage. Arabic script has been, and to all appearances still is, a major factor in African scriptural culture. For some time now, Arabic script has started receiving more attention after the balanced work by Naim (1971), and the last twenty years have seen the publication of new major data-driven studies, such as the series *Arabic literature of Africa*, edited by John Hunwick et al. (1993–2003), albeit with a focus on (literary) content, rather than context.[19] Already in 1997 Nikolay Dobronravin (1997: 95–96) pointed out that, based on more recent fundamental research, such as the cataloguing undertaken by the Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, we are now in a much better position "to proceed to a systematic comparative study of Ajamic scripts".

The data derived from the analysis of these writing traditions and of their products will be of considerable help in a great many disciplines.

Historical linguistics, for instance, may use the data from the analysis of Arabic-script manuscripts for the reconstruction of earlier stages in the history of these languages. Works in this field, such as Bondarev (2005),[20] Abubakar (2001), Dobronravin (2006) and van den Boogert (2000), will hopefully lead to other case studies bridging philology, paleography, and linguistics.

Depending on the volume, amount, and contents of documents yet to be discovered and analyzed, the study of the Arabic-script manuscripts may

[19] Unfortunately, the script employed for texts discussed is rarely mentioned in this work.

[20] Compare also the research project "A study of Old Kanembu in early West African Qur'anic manuscripts and Islamic recitations (Tarjumo) in the light of Kanuri-Kanembu dialects spoken around Lake Chad" (http://www.soas.ac.uk/africa/research/oldkanembu/, 11.03.2012).

provide new inputs for the history of African societies, and in particular, for the history of knowledge in Africa, which will enrich the more recent trends in African historiography (Iliffe 1995).

The complex relationship between language and script in multi-linguistic and multi-graphic societies may provide a new impetus for sociolinguistics, grammatology, and in particular, the sociolinguistics of script choice (Unseth 2008).

Within the framework of language documentation, which deals not only with documentation, but, for most stake-holders, also with the preservation of diversity, reading and writing practices should be included.

Basing themselves on new surveys, language planners, national and international bodies, and those working in education will be better able to evaluate the status of writing traditions and literacies in African societies with a view to innovate language policies and (re-)creations of orthographies.

Similarly, surveys of orthographies will advance language, and in particular script technology standards, such as Unicode, which to date lacks a number of Arabic-based script graphs. By taking into consideration some of the systematic adaptations in Arabic-based scripts (cf. Daniels, this volume), the Unicode standard may benefit from a reconceptualization of Arabic script by decomposing letters in dots and basic letter shapes.

Whatever the future results of research based on Arabic script, the study of this script in Africa should certainly leave behind older Euro-centric conceptions, and strive for a more analytical and positivist outlook on these writing cultures:

> Let us, then, look at [...] Arabic-based scripts in a new way and admire the flexibility (rather than the inadequacy) of this versatile writing system.
> (Daniels 1997: 371)

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Appendix 1:[21] Non-Exhaustive List of References to Arabic Script Usage in Africa, Arranged by Language[22]

North Africa (9)

Coptic [*cop*]

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p. 122, in Worrel, William H. (1934). *Coptic sounds, with an appendix by Hide Shohara*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press

Kabyle [*kab*]

pp. 161–162, in Knappert, Jan (1996). "The transmission of knowledge: A note on the Islamic literatures of Africa". *Sudanic Africa* 7: 159–164

http://www.webcitation.org/66GjTEUtK, in Lewis, M.P. (ed.) (2009). *Ethnologue: Languages of the world*. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International

Nafusi [*jbn*]

In Mumin, Meikal (2009). *The Arabic script in Africa*. M.A. thesis, Universität zu Köln

http://www.webcitation.org/66Hp3qpHb, in Lewis, M.P. (ed.) (2009). *Ethnologue: Languages of the world*. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International

Old Tashelhit / Medieval Berber [*mis*]

In Boogert, Nico van den (2000). "Medieval Berber orthography". *Etudes berbères et chamito-sémitiques: Mélanges offerts à Karl-G. Prasse*, ed. by Salem Chaker, 357–377. Paris & Louvain: Peeters

[21] In his presentation at the 2nd TASIA workshop (Université Libre de Bruxelles, April 26–27, 2013), entitled "Tradition and innovation in modern West African Arabic-script orthographies", Andy Warren-Rothlin mentioned a number of other languages with attested use of Arabic script that could not be included in the present appendix and the map and summary on pp. 41–43. These include Ndut [ndu], Saafi-Saafi [sav], Beduma [bdm], Mpade [mpi], Lagwan [kot], Wandala [mfi], Mina [hna], Baguirmi [bmi], Dazaga [dzg], Tagdal [tda], Foodo [fod], Moose [mos], Gulmanchema [gul], and Tamajaq [ttq].

[22] Three-letter codes in square brackets indicate ISO 639–3 language identifiers. [mul] indicates a glottonym representing multiple language within this classification, and [und] a language which is not indicated by any code. Languages have been organized geographically following Lewis (2009) and UN M.49.

Siwi [*siz*]

In Mumin, Meikal (2009). *The Arabic script in Africa*. M.A. thesis, Universität zu Köln (Lameen Souag, p.c.)

Tachawit [*shy*]

http://www.webcitation.org/66IAoIeS8, in Lewis, M.P. (ed.) (2009). *Ethnologue: Languages of the world*. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International

Tadaksahak [*dsq*]

http://www.webcitation.org/64v9512pU, in Lewis, M.P. (ed.) (2009). *Ethnologue: Languages of the world*. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International

Tamahaq, Tahaggart [*thv*]

http://www.webcitation.org/66IBLCYx8, in Lewis, M.P. (ed.) (2009). *Ethnologue: Languages of the world*. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International

(*Modern*) *Tashelhit* (*Sous*) [*shi*]

In Boogert, Nico van den (1997). *The Berber literary tradition of the Sous, with an edition and translation of* 'The ocean of tears' *by Muḥammad Awzal* (*d. 1749*). Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten

West Africa (*29*)

Akan (*Ashanti*) [*aka*]

p. 114, in Bondarev, Dmitry (2006). "The language of the glosses in the Bornu quranic manuscripts". *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 69.1: 113–140

Balanta-Ganja [*bjt*]

http://www.webcitation.org/66IANzSRu, in Lewis, M.P. (ed.) (2009). *Ethnologue: Languages of the world*. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International

Bamanankan (*Bambara, Wasulunka*) [*bam*]

In Vydrin, Valentin Feodos'evich (1998). "Sur l'écriture mandingue et mande en caractères arabes (mandinka, bambara, soussou, mogofin)". *Mandenkan: Bulletin d'Etudes Linguistiques Mandé* 33: 1–87

pp. 161–163, in Knappert, Jan (1996). "The transmission of knowledge: A note on the Islamic literatures of Africa". *Sudanic Africa* 7: 159–164

Dagbani (*Dagomba*) [*dag*]

In s.n. (1965). "Project report: The Arabic collection". *Research Review, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana* 1.1: 15

Fulah (*Fulfulde, Pulaar, Peul, Fulani*) [*ful*]

In Salvaing, Bernard (2004). "Colonial rule and Fulfulde literature in Futa Jallon (Guinea)". *Sudanic Africa* 15: 111–132.

Ga [*gaa*]

pp. 268–269, in Hegyi, O. (1979). "Minority and restricted uses of the Arabic alphabet: The Aljamiado phenomenon". *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 99.2: 262–269.

Gonja (*Gbanyito*) [*gjn*]

In Northwestern University (16.02.2007). *Arabic manuscripts from West Africa: A catalog of the Herskovits Library collection*. http://digital.library.northwestern.edu/arbmss/index.html

Guang (*Guan*) [*mul*]

In Northwestern University (16.02.2007). *Arabic manuscripts from West Africa: A catalog of the Herskovits Library collection*. http://digital.library.northwestern.edu/arbmss/index.html

Hausa [*hau*]

In Piłaszewicz, Stanisław (2000). *Hausa prose writings in Ajami by Alhaji Umaru from A. Mischlich/H. Sölken's collection*. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer

Jahanka [*jad*]

p. 52, in Warren-Rothlin, Andy (2009). "Script choice, politics, and Bible agencies in West Africa". *The Bible Translator* 60.1: 50–66

http://www.webcitation.org/66A3157vl, in Lewis, M.P. (ed.) (2009). *Ethnologue: Languages of the world*. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International

Jula (*Dioula*) [*dyu*]

In Vydrin, Valentin Feodos'evich (1998). "Sur l'écriture mandingue et mande en caractères arabes (mandinka, bambara, soussou, mogofin)". *Mandenkan: Bulletin d'Etudes Linguistiques Mandé* 33: 1–87

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http://www.webcitation.org/66I9hETm7, in Lewis, M.P. (ed.) (2009). *Ethnologue: Languages of the world*. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International

Kakabe [*kke*]

http://www.webcitation.org/66HnPtFNt, in Lewis, M.P. (ed.) (2009). *Ethnologue: Languages of the world*. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International

Kanuri (*Kanembu*) [*kau*]

In Bondarev, Dmitry (2006). "The language of the glosses in the Bornu quranic manuscripts". *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 69.1: 113–140

Tem (*Kotokoli*) [*kdh*]

p. 763, in Hunwick, John O. (ed.) (2003). *Arabic literature of Africa: The writings of western Sudanic Africa*. Leiden: E.J. Brill
Andy Warren-Rothlin, p.c.
http://www.webcitation.org/66IB332tf, in Lewis, M.P. (ed.) (2009). *Ethnologue: Languages of the world*. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International

Kuranko (*Koranko*) [*knk*]

pp. 161–163, in Knappert, Jan (1996). "The transmission of knowledge: A note on the Islamic literatures of Africa". *Sudanic Africa* 7: 159–164

Mandingo (*Malinke, Wangara*) [*man*]

pp. 161–162, in Knappert, Jan (1996). "The transmission of knowledge: A note on the Islamic literatures of Africa". *Sudanic Africa* 7: 159–164
p. 12, in Sow, Alfâ Ibrâhîm (1966). *La Femme, la vache, la foi: Ecrivains et poètes du Foûta-Djalon*. Paris: Julliard, Classiques Africains

Mandinka [*mnk*]

In Vydrin, Valentin Feodos'evich (1998). "Sur l'écriture mandingue et mande en caractères arabes (mandinka, bambara, soussou, mogofin)". *Mandenkan: Bulletin d'Etudes Linguistiques Mandé* 33: 1–87

Mampruli [*maw*]

In s.n. (1965). "Project report: The Arabic collection". *Research Review, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana* 1.1: 15

Mixifore (*Mogofin*) [*mfg*]

In Vydrin, Valentin Feodos'evich (1998). "Sur l'écriture mandingue et mande en caractères arabes (mandinka, bambara, soussou, mogofin)". *Mandenkan: Bulletin d'Etudes Linguistiques Mandé* 33: 1–87

Nupe-Nupe-Tako (*Nupe*) [*nup*]

p. 114, in Bondarev, Dmitry (2006). "The language of the glosses in the Bornu quranic manuscripts". *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 69.1: 113–140
pp. 268–269, in Hegyi, O. (1979). "Minority and restricted uses of the Arabic alphabet: The Aljamiado phenomenon". *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 99.2: 262–269.

Serer-Sine (*Serer*) [*srr*]

http://www.webcitation.org/66GREfAKj, in Lewis, M.P. (ed.) (2009). *Ethnologue: Languages of the world*. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International
In Mumin, Meikal (2009). *The Arabic script in Africa*. M.A. thesis, Universität zu Köln (Nikolay Dobronravin, p.c.)

Songhay [*mul*]

p. 114, in Bondarev, Dmitry (2006). "The language of the glosses in the Bornu quranic manuscripts". *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 69.1: 113–140

Soninke (*Sarakole*) [*snk*]

p. 114, in Bondarev, Dmitry (2006). "The language of the glosses in the Bornu quranic manuscripts". *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 69.1: 113–140
In ISESCO (2009). *ISESCO's project for transcription of African languages in Arabic script*. http://www.isesco.org.ma/english/publications/Marabic/P2.php
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p. 52, in Warren-Rothlin, Andy (2009). "Script choice, politics, and Bible agencies in West Africa". *The Bible Translator* 60.1: 50–66

Susu [*sus*]

In Vydrin, Valentin Feodos'evich (1998). "Sur l'écriture mandingue et mande en caractères arabes (mandinka, bambara, soussou, mogofin)". *Mandenkan: Bulletin d'Etudes Linguistiques Mandé* 33: 1–87

Tamashek (*Tuareg*) [*tmh*]

In Savage, Andrew (2008). "Writing Tuareg: The three script options". *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 192: 5–13

Wolof [*wol*]

In Camara, Sana & R.H. Mitch (1997). "Ajami literature in Senegal: The example of Sëriñ Muusaa Ka, poet and biographer". *Research in African Literatures* 28.3: 163–182

Yoruba [*yor*]

In Ogunbiyi, Isaac Adejoju (2003). "The search for a Yoruba orthography since the 1840s: Obstacles to the choice of the Arabic script". *Sudanic Africa: A Journal of Historical Sources* 14: 77–102

Zarma (*Djerma, Zerma*) [*dje*]

p. 114, in Bondarev, Dmitry (2006). "The language of the glosses in the Bornu quranic manuscripts". *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 69.1: 113–140

Zenaga (*Zanagha*) [*zen*]

pp. 161–162, in Knappert, Jan (1996). "The transmission of knowledge: A note on the Islamic literatures of Africa". *Sudanic Africa* 7: 159–164

Central Africa (*4*)

Kotoko [*mul*]

pp. 268–269, in Hegyi, O. (1979). "Minority and restricted uses of the Arabic alphabet: The Aljamiado phenomenon". *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 99.2: 262–269.

Maba [*mde*]

In Mumin, Meikal (2009). *The Arabic script in Africa*. M.A. thesis (Nikolay Dobronravin, p.c.)
Andy Warren-Rothlin, p.c.
http://www.webcitation.org/66HndTvlt, in Lewis, M.P. (ed.) (2009). *Ethnologue: Languages of the world*. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International

Swahili, Congo (*Kingwana*) [*swc*]

In Knappert, Jan (1996). "The transmission of knowledge: A note on the Islamic literatures of Africa". *Sudanic Africa* 7: 159–164
Luffin (this volume)

Zande [*zne*]

In Abu Bakr, Yusuf el Khalifa (1978 [1980]). "Orthographical experiments in the southern Sudan". *Aspects of language on the Sudan*, ed. by Robin Thelwall, 200–210. Ulster: The New University of Ulster

East Africa (*30*)

Aari [*aiw*]

http://www.webcitation.org/66GluJXJN, in Lewis, M.P. (ed.) (2009). *Ethnologue: Languages of the world*. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International

Afar [*aar*]

In Kemal, Abdulwehab (2008). "The linguistic features of Ajemi manuscripts of Shaykh Tälḫa Jaʿfär /c 1853–1936/". *Proceedings of the 19th Annual Conference of the Institute of Language Studies*, ed. by Messele Abebayehu. Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University

Amharic [*amh*]

In Kemal, Abdulwehab (2008). "The linguistic features of Ajemi manuscripts of Shaykh Tälḫa Jaʿfär /c 1853–1936/". *Proceedings of the 19th Annual Conference of the Institute of Language Studies*, ed. by Messele Abebayehu. Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University

Anuak [*anu*]

In Abu Bakr, Yusuf el Khalifa (1978 [1980]). "Orthographical experiments in the southern Sudan". *Aspects of language in the Sudan*, ed. by Robin Thelwall, 200–210. Ulster: The New University of Ulster

Argobba [*agj*]

In Kemal, Abdulwehab (2008). "The linguistic features of Ajemi manuscripts of Shaykh Tälḫa Jaʿfär /c 1853–1936/". *Proceedings of the 19th Annual Conference of the Institute of Language Studies*, ed. by Messele Abebayehu. Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University

Bari [*bfa*]

In Abu Bakr, Yusuf el Khalifa (1978 [1980]). "Orthographical experiments in the southern Sudan". *Aspects of language in the Sudan*, ed. by Robin Thelwall, 200–210. Ulster: The New University of Ulster

Bedawiyet (*Beja*) [*bej*]

In Wedekind, Klaus, Charlotte Wedekind & Abuzeinab Musa (2008). "Beja pedagogical grammar". *Afrikanistik online*, http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0009-10-12839

Birked (*Birgid*) [*brk*]

In Ahmed, Asmaa Mohd. Ibrahim (2004). "Suggestions for writing modern Nubian languages". *Occasional Papers in the Study of Sudanese Languages* 9: 185–213

Chimiini [*swh*]

p. 139, in Lewis, Ioan Myrddin (1958). "The Gadabuursi Somali script". *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 21.1–3: 134–156

Vianello & Banafunzi (this volume)

Dinka [*din*]

In Abu Bakr, Yusuf el Khalifa (1978 [1980]). "Orthographical experiments in the southern Sudan". *Aspects of language in the Sudan*, ed. by Robin Thelwall, 200–210. Ulster: The New University of Ulster

In ISESCO (2009). *ISESCO's project for transcription of African languages in Arabic script*. http://www.isesco.org.ma/english/publications/Marabic/P2.php

Ganda (*Luganda*) [*lug*]

In ISESCO (2009). *ISESCO's project for transcription of African languages in Arabic script*. http://www.isesco.org.ma/english/publications/Marabic/P2.php

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Harari [*har*]

In Wagner, Ewald (1983a). *Harari-Texte in arabischer Schrift mit Übersetzung und Kommentar*. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner

Kenuzi-Dongola [*kzh*]

In Ahmed, Asmaa Mohd. Ibrahim (2004). "Suggestions for writing modern Nubian languages". *Occasional Papers in the Study of Sudanese Languages* 9: 185–213

Lugbara [*lgg*]

In ISESCO (2009). *ISESCO's Project for transcription of African languages in Arabic script*. http://www.isesco.org.ma/english/publications/Marabic/P2.php

Malagasy (*Malgache*) [*mlg*]

In Munthe, Ludvig (1982). *La tradition arabico-malgache vue à travers le manuscrit A-6 d'Oslo et d'autres manuscrits disponibles*. Antananarivo: Trano Printy Fiangonana Loterana Malagasy (TPFLM)

In Versteegh, Kees (2001). "Arabic in Madagascar". *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 64.2: 177–187

Maore [*swb*]

http://www.webcitation.org/66IAIwhFh, in Lewis, M.P. (ed.) (2009). *Ethnologue: Languages of the world*. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International

Mesqan (*Mask'an*) [*mvz*]

p. 363, in Wagner, Ewald (1983b). "Selt'i-verse in arabischer Schrift aus dem Schlobies-Nachlass". *Ethiopian studies dedicated to Wolf Leslau*, ed. by Stanislav Segert & András J.E. Bodrogligeti, 363–374. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz

Moru [*mgd*]

In Abu Bakr, Yusuf el Khalifa (1978 [1980]). "Orthographical experiments in the southern Sudan". *Aspects of language in the Sudan*, ed. by Robin Thelwall, 200–210. Ulster: The New University of Ulster

Murle [*mur*]

In Abu Bakr, Yusuf el Khalifa (1978 [1980]). "Orthographical experiments in the southern Sudan". *Aspects of language in the Sudan*, ed. by Robin Thelwall, 200–210. Ulster: The New University of Ulster

Ngazidja (*Comorian*) [*zdj*]

161–163. In Knappert, Jan (1996). "The transmission of knowledge: A note on the Islamic literatures of Africa". *Sudanic Africa* 7: 159–164

Nobiin (*Mahas*) [*fia*]

In Ahmed, Asmaa Mohd. Ibrahim (2004). "Suggestions for writing modern Nubian languages". *Occasional Papers in the Study of Sudanese Languages* 9: 185–213

In ISESCO (2009). *ISESCO's project for transcription of African languages in Arabic acript*. http://www.isesco.org.ma/english/publications/Marabic/P2.php

http://www.webcitation.org/66GkFof9h, in Lewis, M.P. (ed.) (2009). *Ethnologue: Languages of the world*. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International

Oromo [*orm*]

In Kemal, Abdulwehab (2008). "The linguistic features of Ajemi manuscripts of Shaykh Tälḥa Ja'fär /c 1853–1936/". *Proceedings of the 19th Annual Conference of the Institute of Language Studies*, ed. by Messele Abebayehu. Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University

Otuho (*Latuka*) [*lot*]

In Abu Bakr, Yusuf el Khalifa (1978 [1980]). "Orthographical experiments in the southern Sudan". *Aspects of language in the Sudan*, ed. by Robin Thelwall, 200–210. Ulster: The New University of Ulster

Shilluk [*shk*]

In Le Clézio, Yves M.L. (1975). "Writing Shilluk with an Arabic script". *Directions in Sudanese linguistics and folklore*, ed. by Sayyid Hamid Hurreiz & Herman Bell, 33–43. Khartoum: Khartoum University Press

Silt'e [*stv*]

In Wagner, Ewald (1983b). "Selt'i-verse in arabischer Schrift aus dem Schlobies-Nachlass". *Ethiopian studies dedicated to Wolf Leslau*, ed. by Stanislav Segert & András J.E. Bodrogligeti, 363–374. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz

Somali [*som*]

In Lewis, Ioan Myrddin (1958). "The Gadabuursi Somali script". *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 21.1–3: 134–156

Swahili [*swh*][23]

In Dammann, Ernst, Wolfgang Voigt, Dieter George & Hartmut-Ortwin Feistel (1993). *Handschriften in Swahili und anderen Sprachen Afrikas*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner

Tigrigna [*tir*]

In Kemal, Abdulwehab (2008). "The linguistic features of Ajemi manuscripts of Shaykh Tälḥa Jaʿfär /c 1853–1936/". *Proceedings of the 19th Annual Conference of the Institute of Language Studies*, ed. by Messele Abebayehu. Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University

Wolane [*wle*]

Kemal Abdulwehab, p.c.

[23] The use of Swahili is reported not only for East Africa, but also for Central Africa (Congo) listed here under Swahili, Congo (Kingwana) [swc], as well as South Africa (Mozambique, Bonate 2008).

Zaghawa [*zag*]

In ISESCO (2009). *ISESCO's project for transcription of African languages in Arabic script*. http://www.isesco.org.ma/english/publications/Marabic/P2.php
p. 52. In Warren-Rothlin, Andy (2009). "Script choice, politics, and Bible agencies in West Africa". *The Bible Translator* 60.1: 50–66

South Africa (7)

Afrikaans [*afr*]

In Haron, Muhammed (2003). "A portrait of the Arabic script at the Cape". *Sudanic Africa: A Journal of Historical Sources* 14: 33–54
In Hoedemaekers, Iris & Kees Versteegh (2009). "South Africa". *Encyclopedia of Arabic language and linguistics*, ed. by Mushira Eid et al., IV, 290–294. Leiden: E.J. Brill

Koti (*Ekoti, Esangaji*) [*eko*]

http://www.webcitation.org/64v9PSgYi, in Lewis, M.P. (ed.) (2009). *Ethnologue: Languages of the world*. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International

Makhuwa (*Makua, Macua*) [*vmw*]

In Bonate, Liazzat J.K. (2008). "The use of the Arabic script in northern Mozambique". *Tydskrif vir Letterkunde* 45.1
pp. 161–163, in Knappert, Jan (1996). "The transmission of knowledge: A note on the Islamic literatures of Africa". *Sudanic Africa* 7: 159–164

Makwe [*ymk*]

In Dobronravin, Nikolay A. (1997). "Suggestions for a systematic study: Islalmic [sic]/Ajamic scripts in the 20th Century". *Oriental studies in the 20th century: Achievements and prospects*, 95–97. Moscow: Institute of Oriental Studies of the RAS; Institute of Oriental Studies, Orientalists' Society, Russian Academy of Sciences

Malay (*Melayu*) [*msa*]

In Haron, Muhammed (2003). "A portrait of the Arabic script at the Cape". *Sudanic Africa: A Journal of Historical Sources* 14: 33–54

Mwani (*Kimwani*) [*wmw*]

http://www.webcitation.org/66IB50xGa, in Lewis, M.P. (ed.) (2009). *Ethnologue: Languages of the world*. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International

Yao [*yao*]

In Bonate, Liazzat J.K. (2008). "The use of the Arabic script in northern Mozambique". *Tydskrif vir Letterkunde* 45.1

Appendix 2: References Containing Inconclusive Evidence Indicating Possible Usage of Arabic Script in Africa, Arranged by Language

North Africa (*2*)

Tamazight [*tzm*]

pp. 161–162, in Knappert, Jan (1996). "The transmission of knowledge: A note on the Islamic literatures of Africa". *Sudanic Africa* 7: 159–164

http://www.webcitation.org/66I8IISI6, in Lewis, M.P. (ed.) (2009). *Ethnologue: Languages of the world*. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International

Tarifit [*rif*][24]

pp. 161–162, in Knappert, Jan (1996). "The transmission of knowledge: A note on the Islamic literatures of Africa". *Sudanic Africa* 7: 159–164

http://www.webcitation.org/66Gkuon3E, in Lewis, M.P. (ed.) (2009). *Ethnologue: Languages of the world*. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International

West Africa (*1*)

Mende [*men*]

In Bledsoe, Caroline H. & Kenneth M. Robey (1993). "Arabic literacy and secrecy among the Mende of Sierra Leone". *Cross-cultural approaches to literacy*, ed. by Brian Street, 111–134. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Central Africa (*4*)

Kituba [*ktu*]

pp. 161–163, in Knappert, Jan (1996). "The transmission of knowledge: A note on the Islamic literatures of Africa". *Sudanic Africa* 7: 159–164

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[24] Maarten Kossmann (p.c.) is not aware of any Arabic-based writing tradition for Tarifit or Tamazight, except for a few publications, which "have been published since the 1980s but [… should be considered as a] different situation from 'normal' ajami, which is not linked to formal non-religious teaching" (cf. also Lameen Souag, p.c., in Mumin (2009) speaking of a shift towards Arabic script usage for Tarifit).

Lingala [*lin*]

pp. 161–163, in Knappert, Jan (1996). "The transmission of knowledge: A note on the Islamic literatures of Africa". *Sudanic Africa* 7: 159–164

Nyanja (*Chewa*) [*nya*]

pp. 161–163, in Knappert, Jan (1996). "The transmission of knowledge: A note on the Islamic literatures of Africa". *Sudanic Africa* 7: 159–164

Tedaga (*Teda*) [*tuq*]

p. 582, in Argungu, D.M. (1994). "Battle of the alphabet". *Muslim and Arab Perspectives* 1.5: 579–583

East Africa (*7*)

Fur [*fvr*]

In Mumin, Meikal (2009). *The Arabic script in Africa*. M.A. thesis, Universität zu Köln (Nikolay Dobronravin, Christine Waag, Muhammad Jalaal Hashim, p.c.)

Makonde [*kde*]

In Mumin, Meikal (2009). *The Arabic script in Africa*. M.A. thesis, Universität zu Köln (Nikolay Dobronravin, Peter Kraal, p.c.)

Midob [*mei*]

In Ahmed, Asmaa Mohd. Ibrahim (2004). "Suggestions for writing modern Nubian languages". *Occasional Papers in the Study of Sudanese Languages* 9: 185–213

Saho [*ssy*]

In Mumin, Meikal (2009). *The Arabic script in Africa*. M.A. thesis, Universität zu Köln (Nikolay Dobronravin, p.c.)

Shona [*sna*]

pp. 161–163, in Knappert, Jan (1996). "The transmission of knowledge: A note on the Islamic literatures of Africa". *Sudanic Africa* 7: 159–164

Tigré [*tig*]

pp. 161–163, in Knappert, Jan (1996). "The transmission of knowledge: A note on the Islamic literatures of Africa". *Sudanic Africa* 7: 159–164

Rundi [*run*]

pp. 161–163, in Knappert, Jan (1996). "The transmission of knowledge: A note on the Islamic literatures of Africa". *Sudanic Africa* 7: 159–164

South Africa (*1*)

Zulu [*zul*]

In Dangor, Suleman Essop (1986). "Zulu in the Arabic script". *al-Ilm* (*Journal of the Centre for Research In Islamic Studies, University of Durban-Westville*):102–106

pp. 161–163, in Knappert, Jan (1996). "The transmission of knowledge: A note on the Islamic literatures of Africa". *Sudanic Africa* 7: 159–164

Appendix 3: References Indicating Usage of Arabic Script in Africa Concerning Undetermined Languages, Arranged by Language

Alamba [*und*]

In ISESCO (2009). *ISESCO's project for transcription of African languages in Arabic script*. http://www.webcitation.org/65onDHHrx

Tajrini [*und*]

In ISESCO (2009). *ISESCO's project for transcription of African languages in Arabic script*. http://www.webcitation.org/65onDHHrx

Woday [*und*]

In ISESCO (2009). *ISESCO's project for transcription of African languages in Arabic script*. http://www.webcitation.org/65onDHHrx

SECTION II

NORTH AFRICA

PRELIMINARY NOTES ON TUAREG IN ARABIC SCRIPT FROM NIGER[1]

Maarten Kossmann and Ramada Elghamis

1. Introduction

Tuareg[2] is a Berber language spoken in the central and southern Sahara and the Sahel, in Niger, Mali, Algeria, and Burkina Faso. Tuareg society has a long tradition of literacy. The Tuareg script, *tifinaġ*, is a continuation of the Libyco-Berber script, a North-African creation inspired by the Phoenician and/or Punic alphabetic script(s) (Kerr 2010; Pichler 2007), which, in Antiquity, was used in the Maghrib. As such, *tifinaġ*, has an Africa-internal history of over 2000 years. The script is known and used by important parts of the Tuareg population, in a wide array of social settings (Elghamis 2011). Tuareg society is multigraphic. In addition to *tifinaġ*, since the 1960s an official Latin orthography is used, which is taught in experimental schools and other alphabetization modules. The third script in use for writing Tuareg is the Arabic script, commonly referred to by the Hausa (originally Arabic) term *ajami*. Tuareg Ajami is mainly found in those tribes which are considered experts in Islamic learning (so-called 'maraboutic tribes'); in fact, there seems to be some kind of complementary distribution between the use of Arabic script in these groups, and the use of *tifinaġ* by other parts of society. Ajami—and Arabic of course—are the major vehicles for writing about Islam; using *tifinaġ* for such purposes is considered inappropriate by many, albeit not by everybody. However, members of the maraboutic tribes also use Ajami for secular purposes, such as personal letters.

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[1] [In the transcription of Tuareg, the following special symbols (with their IPA equivalents) are used: *ẓ* /zˤ/, *ḍ* /dˤ/, *ḷ* /lˤ/, *č* /ʧ/, *š* /ʃ/].

[2] We shall use here the exonym Tuareg rather than 'Tamashek', as found in many modern Anglo-Saxon sources. The reason is twofold. In the first place, Tamashek corresponds to the Mali Tuareg pronunciation of the ethnonym/glossonym, and can therefore be considered an exonym itself in a Niger context ('Tamajaq' would be more appropriate). In the second place, scholarly tradition both inside and outside Niger commonly uses 'Tuareg'. At least in Niger, most Tuaregs do not object to the term, which has no derogatory connotations. See Aghali-Zakara (1984).

While there exists reasonable documentation on *tifinaġ* (see Elghamis 2011), our knowledge of Tuareg Ajami is extremely poor, and its form, history and function remain largely unstudied. This is regrettable, as, according to some sources, early documents in Tuareg Ajami would date back to the 16th century CE (Gutelius 2000), which would make them earlier than any other Ajami tradition in the region, with the exception of Kanuri (Bondarev 2006).

In this article, we shall trace some of the main traits of Tuareg Ajami as currently used in Niger, on the basis of a small corpus gathered by Ramada Elghamis during his fieldwork on *tifinaġ*. It consists of four recent personal letters, one recent declaration of divorce and one four-page manuscript with religious content. The corpus is described briefly in the following; for more information and for the texts, see Elghamis (2011):

i. Letter by a craftsman from Azel (near Agadez), belonging to the Kel Äwäy. 2005; 5 lines.
ii. Letter by a craftsman from Teghazert (near Agadez). 2001; 5 lines.
iii. Letter by a marabout from Tillabéry, Ifoghas tribe. not dated (recent); 5 lines.
iv. Attestation of divorce from a marabout from Tillabéry (same writer as iii), Ifoghas tribe. Dated 1430 AH; 5 lines.
v. Letter by a person from Tahoua, Iwellemmeden tribe. 2000; 19 lines.
vi. Manuscript with theological content, deposited at the archives of the Institut de Recherches en Sciences Humaines (Département des Manuscrits Arabes et Ajami) of Abdou Moumouni University in Niamey (manuscript No. 3988). According to the colophon, it was written by Mukhammad Assalix Ibn Mukhammad. The document is not dated, but may not be extremely old. About 40 lines in total.

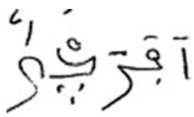
While studying the orthography of such writings, many questions as to their context come up. The most basic question is to what extent the writings represent a tradition, i.e. a code learned from members of an earlier generation, or separate individual creations; the last possibility should not be ruled out *a priori*, as teaching of Arabic (including, of course the script), is a major element in Islamic education, and an individual may start writing his or her own language by means of this script without any further model. Supposing that the writing represents a tradition, one would have to determine the parameters of variation. Are we dealing with variation linked to geography and tribal affiliation (e. g. an Ayer Tuareg tradition as opposed to an Iwellemmeden Tuareg tradition), or are there different conventions related to different traditions of schooling, for instance between the Qādiriyya and Tijāniyya brotherhoods? Unfortunately, the present corpus does not allow

us to draw any conclusions on these questions, and they remain open to further research.

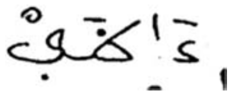
While the context of the Ajami texts studied here remains largely unknown, they allow us to say something about the graphic conventions employed in writing Tuareg in Arabic script. In this article, we shall present the most salient characteristics of Tuareg Ajami orthography in Niger, and, where possible, integrate them into the wider context of regional Ajami traditions.

2. Some General Notes on the Writing

Tuareg Ajami basically uses Maghribinian/Sudanic writing style, as witnessed, amongst others, by the use of ڢ ⟨f$_1$⟩ and ڧ ⟨q$_1$⟩, e.g.

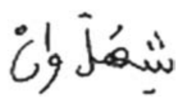


⟨’af$_1$arak$_4^0$y$_1^{a0}$⟩
afărag ‘garden’ [1][3]



⟨ʔa’ḏaf$_1^0$⟩
aẓəf ‘epidemic’ [5]

Sometimes there is unexpected absence of letter linking, e.g.



⟨šihula w^{a}n^0⟩
šihulawen ‘greetings’ [5]

Tā’ marbūṭa may be used for final /t/, also when this /t/ is not a feminine marker, e.g.

[3] The numbers refer to the texts enumerated above.



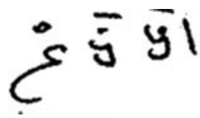
⟨’n^{0}ẗa⟩
ənta ‘he’ [5]

In syllable-final position, one sometimes finds *tanwīn* for a Tuareg Vn sequence; often, instead of the doubled vowel marking usual in *tanwīn*, the vowel sign is written only once, or not at all, thereby obliterating the Tuareg *n* (this could be called ‘pseudo-*tanwīn*’). An example of *tanwīn* for a Tuareg Vn sequence is:



⟨’amaḍ^{0}rayi^{n}⟩
amăḍray-in ‘my younger brother’ [5]

An example of ‘pseudo-*tanwīn*’ is:



⟨’ḏaḏa^{ʿ0}⟩
ăzzănzăɣ ‘I (will) sell’ [5]

3. Notes on Graphemic Choices

3.1. *The Writing of Tuareg /z/ and /ẓ/*

The Arabic alphabet contains a number of letters, whose pronunciation is merged in some pronunciation practices. This is especially the case of the interdental fricatives, ذ ⟨ḏ⟩, ث ⟨ṯ⟩ and ظ ⟨ḏ̣⟩. In pronunciation practices of the Arabic world east of Libya, these consonants are often pronounced [s], [z] and [zˤ], respectively, thereby merging with س ⟨s⟩ and ز ⟨z⟩.[4]

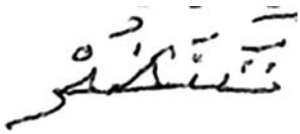
[4] All mentions of pronunciation practices refer to the pronunciation of Classical Arabic texts. The phonetic structures and developments in the local vernaculars are often different.

In the Niger Tuareg texts studied here, س is used consistently for denoting /s/; one remarks however, that in Mali Tuareg texts, sometimes ث is used instead (Elghamis 2011). On the other hand, the most common way for writing Tuareg /z/ is by means of ذ, e.g.



⟨'adiḏa⟩
adi za 'this one; therefore' [6]

ز is also used, but less frequently. Similarly, ظ is used for the Tuareg pharyngealized ('emphatic') consonant /ẓ/:



⟨tanaḍum^{0}⟩
tan ăẓum '(the one) of the fasting' [4][5]

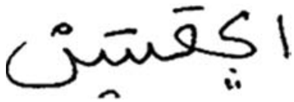
While these choices are easily understood from the point of view of the eastern Arabic pronunciation traditions (and one might assume that the choice of *ḏāl* instead of *zā'* is motivated by the high frequency of determiners with *ḏāl* in Arabic), they contrast with pronunciation traditions of the Maghrib. In the Maghrib, when the interdental fricatives are simplified in the pronunciation of Classical Arabic, they are pronounced as dental stops, and not as fricatives.

The use of *ḏāl* for /z/ is also found in the Hausa Ajami tradition, and its use in Tuareg could be considered an adaptation to Hausa practices. Such an analysis is impossible for /ẓ/; while the sound is common to Tuareg and (Middle Eastern) Classical Arabic, it does not exist in Hausa. As a consequence, the identification of Arabic ظ with Tuareg /ẓ/ cannot derive immediately from Hausa practice.

[5] Note that in this example, the *tā'* is written in its isolated form, even though it is connected with the following *nūn*.

3.2. *The Writing of* /ġ/

Tuareg /ġ/ is phonetically very similar to Arabic /ġ/. As a consequence, one would expect the use of the sign غ. While this is the case with some authors, others consistently use ع for Tuareg /ġ/, e.g.

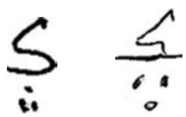


⟨’k_4ʿasan^0⟩
ăgeɣ-asăn ‘I did to them’ [5]

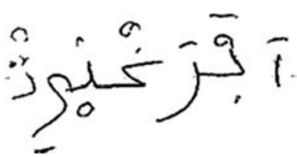
The reasons behind this choice may be twofold. In the first place, the sign غ is also used for denoting /g/ (see below), so not using it for /ġ/ may be a way of preventing ambiguity. In the second place, the normal Tuareg treatment of Arabic /ʿ/ in loanwords is substitution by /ġ/; thus the name *ʿUṯmān* becomes *Ġosman* in Tuareg. One could assume that the two are merged in the pronunciation of Arabic, and therefore equivalent options when choosing a way to render Tuareg /ġ/. However, in the Tuareg spoken by maraboutic tribes the pharyngeal pronunciation of /ʿ/ is maintained in Arabic loanwords. As Ajami is strongly tied to these groups, this explanation may therefore not be that compelling.

3.3. *The Writing of* /g/

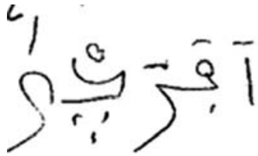
Classical Arabic does not have a phoneme /g/. Tuareg does, and several devices are found for writing /g/. The first device is the use of *kāf* with three dots underneath. The position of the dots with respect to each other varies; sometimes the single dot is above, sometimes it is below, e.g.



Alternatively, /g/ can be written by means of the Arabic letter *ġayn*; sometimes both options occur in a single text, e.g.



⟨'af$_1$araġ^{0}n$_e$y$_1$it^0⟩
afăraɡ net 'his garden' [1]

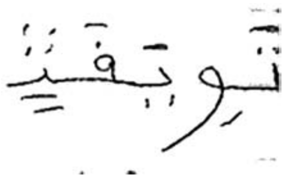


⟨'afarak$_4^0$y$_1^{a0}$⟩
afăraɡ 'garden' [1]

The use of triple-dotted *kāf* for /g/ is found elsewhere in the Islamic world; one may cite as an example the 'New' (i.e. post-Medieval) Sous Berber orthography from Morocco (van den Boogert 1997: 61). The use of *ġayn* for /g/ is paralleled by Hausa and Kanuri orthographies.

3.4. *The Writing of* /č/

This sound—absent in Classical Arabic—appears only once in the corpus. There it is written as a *tā'* with four dots, e.g.



⟨tawiyaq$_1$aṯ$_1$i^n⟩
tawəyăq-qăč-čin 'you brought it there' [1]

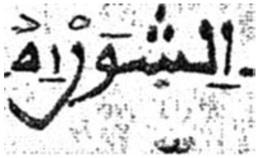
This usage is reminiscent of the Hausa use of *ṯā'* (i.e. *tā'* with three dots) to render Hausa /c/.

3.5. *The Writing of* /ŋ/

The velar nasal—extremely rare in Tuareg and absent in Classical Arabic—does not occur in the corpus. Forms elicited by Ramada Elghamis from the same authors as those of some of the letters have a *qāf* with three dots underneath. A similar usage is known from Fulfulde orthography: Arensdorff (1913: 13) defines ڨ, i.e. *qāf* with three dots above the letter, as a "variante qu'on rencontre quelquefois chez certains auteurs 'torodos' ou 'nigériens'".

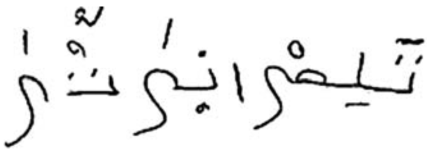
3.6. *The Writing of* /e/

In Tuareg Ajami the vowel /e/—not phonemic in Classical Arabic but a stable phoneme in Tuareg—is represented in a number of ways. The first way is by means of a dot underneath the consonant. This vowel sign, known as the ‘Warš dot’, derives from the *ʾimāla* sign in the Qur’anic reading tradition transmitted by ‘Uṯmān ibn Saʿīd al-Quṭbī, known as Warš, e.g.



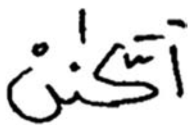
⟨’ilš$_{e}$wal^{0} ’ihu⟩
iššewăl ihu ‘he speaks *ihu*’ [6]

The ‘Warš dot’ can be accompanied by *yāʾ* and a superposed *ʾalif*, e.g.



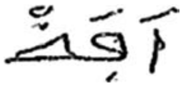
⟨talim^{0}’n$_{e}$y$_{\imath}^{a}$t^{0}y$_{\imath}^{a}$⟩
taḷəm net ‘his camel’ [1]

/e/ may also be expressed by means of the superposed *ʾalif* alone, e.g.

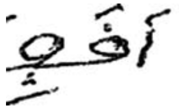


⟨’akkan^{a}n^{0}⟩
əkkânen ‘that pass’ [5]

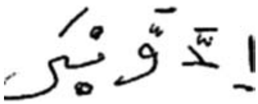
The use of the ‘Warš dot’ accompanied or not by *yāʾ* and a superposed *ʾalif* for /e/ is also known in other West-African Ajami traditions, among others Hausa (cf. Mischlich 1911: 5). Alternatively, *kasra* (normally /i/) or *fatḥa* (normally /a/) are used to render Tuareg /e/, e.g.



⟨’afaḍ^{0}⟩
efăḍ ‘thousand’ [4]



⟨’aġaf$_{1}^{0}$⟩
eɣăf ‘head’ [3]



⟨’iddawwan$_{e}$y$_{1}^{a}$⟩
edăwănne ‘chat’ [2]

There are no special signs for /o/ (written with *ḍamma*) and the central vowels /ə/ and /ă/. The vowel /ə/ can be written by any of the vowel signs, with a certain preference per author for one or the other option. The vowel /ă/ is always written with *fatḥa*.

4. Tuareg *Ajami* in Its Regional Context

Determining the regional context of Tuareg Ajami presents us with interesting problems. On the one hand, Tuareg has a phonemic system that is much more similar to Classical Arabic than that of other Sahelian languages. Sometimes this similarity leads to the expected choice from the Arabic point of view; thus, the pharyngealized (‘emphatic’) consonants of Tuareg are written with the signs for the emphatic consonants of Arabic. However, as shown above, the choice does not always take the expected direction; thus, in spite of the existence of a sound /ġ/ both in Tuareg and in Arabic, some writers use غ for Tuareg /g/ and ع for Tuareg /ġ/. Moreover, while some choices correspond to Arabic usage in general, they do not always correspond to usage in Northern Africa—which, from the point of view of trade and scholarly networks would have been the most logical point of reference. This is in any case true for the writing of ظ for /ḏ̣/.

At some points there are connections to other Sahelian Ajami traditions. This is especially clear in the choice of graphemes for sounds which do not exist in Classical Arabic. Thus the use of the ‘Warš dot’ for /e/ is commonly found in West-African traditions of Arabic writing; similarly, the use of triple-dotted *qāf* for /ŋ/ and of four-dot ݜ for /č/ have parallels in Fulfulde and Hausa practices, respectively.

The situation is more complicated in the case of unexpected pronunciations of graphically unmodified Arabic letters, such as غ for /g/ and ذ for /z/. While these have parallels in the surrounding Ajami traditions, one can only appreciate these choices when also taking into account the local traditions of pronouncing Classical Arabic. In present-day Niger, there exist pronunciation traditions of Classical Arabic that are quite different from the pronunciation conventions in the Arabic-speaking countries. These traditions are locally not considered to be wrong, but have a certain prestige. From personal experience we may refer to a Hausa imam in Agadez, who, when speaking Arabic, uses a Libyan type of Standard Arabic with a good Arab Arabic pronunciation. However, when citing Qurʾān or Ḥadīṯ, he switches to an entirely different mode of pronouncing Arabic; for example, his casual pronunciation of *qāf* is the uvular stop [q], as in Standard Arabic, while his Qurʾanic pronunciation is the ejective stop [k']. In the study of Ajami orthographies, the importance of local pronunciation traditions of Classical Arabic (which may in fact have preceded the development of the Ajami) should not be underestimated. Any serious investigation in Ajami orthography should therefore also include an investigation in the pronunciation of Arabic.

The Tuareg Ajami graphemic choices studied here present us with many intriguing questions. Even if some choices would be immediately related to the Ajami traditions of the region, and not derived from common pronunciation practices of Arabic, the historical implication of this remains to be studied. If it is true that Tuareg Ajami goes back to the 1500s (Gutelius 2000) or even earlier, it is very well possible that Tuareg Ajami constituted the basis for (some of) the other Sahelian Ajami traditions. However, without a more comprehensive investigation into the nature and the history of Tuareg Ajami, there is no way to prove or disprove such a hypothesis.

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WRITING 'SHELHA' IN NEW MEDIA: EMERGENT NON-ARABIC LITERACY IN SOUTHWESTERN ALGERIA[1]

Lameen Souag

1. Introduction

It is and always has been a rather common situation worldwide, perhaps especially in Africa, for a community to speak one language but write in another, a phenomenon termed 'exographia' by Lüpke (forthcoming). In such cases, orthographic conventions for the spoken language are likely to arise more or less spontaneously as writers find occasions to write words in it. Yet, while the orthographic traditions of many languages using the Arabic or Latin scripts are likely to have begun in this manner, the emergence of such conventions, and the contexts in which writers feel the need for them, have received relatively little attention.

Southwestern Algeria (defined here as the Saharan *wilaya*s of Tindouf, Bechar, En Naama, El Bayadh, and Adrar) is a multilingual region, in which the primary language of literacy is overwhelmingly, and has long been, Standard Arabic. Its indigenous tradition of Arabic literacy in the *maġribī* script through Qur'anic schools has (as elsewhere in Algeria) been expanded and to a large extent supplanted since 1962 by universal state-administered education using the pan-Arab *nasḫī* script. In contrast to some other regions of Algeria, competence in French is relatively limited. As a result of these factors, speakers of non-Arabic languages in the region show a strong tendency to resort to Arabic transcriptions for their languages rather than Latin ones. Local and national linguistic ideologies tend to limit the use of these languages in the traditional domains of literacy; however, in recent years some speakers have taken advantage of new domains, in particular mobile phones and the Internet, creating an unprecedented new corpus of written material. The script chosen is frequently Arabic; besides being the default written

[1] [In the transcription of 'Shelha', the following special symbols (with their IPA equivalents) are used: *ẓ* /zˤ/, *ḍ* /dˤ/, *ṭ* /tˤ /, *ṛ* /rˤ/, *ž* /ʒ/, *š* /ʃ/]

language for most people in the region, it has the advantage of distinguishing many phonemes widely found in regional languages (notably pharyngeals and emphatics) which are not distinguished in the only other familiar orthography, French. The orthographic practices emerging as a result, and the contexts in which they are used, provide insights with broader applicability to the emergence of grass-roots first-language literacy. The lessons they have to offer should be useful to language planning and teaching for the region.

1.1. *Sociolinguistic Situation*

The dominant spoken language of southwestern Algeria is Maghrebi Arabic; Hassaniya Arabic is also widely spoken around Tindouf. Several distinct Berber varieties are spoken alongside Arabic (Galand 2002): Taznatit in the Gourara region around Timimoun and sporadically further south (Boudot-Lamotte 1964; Mammeri 1984; Bellil 2006); in the upper Saoura valley and the Ksour Mountains, a number of closely related Zenati varieties collectively known in older linguistic literature as "kçours du sud-oranais" (Kossmann 2010); and the more distantly related Tamasheq (transcriptions here are based on Heath 2006), spoken by the traditionally nomadic Tuaregs around Reggane, Adrar, and In-Salah. In addition to these, in Tabelbala a heavily Berber-influenced Songhay language is spoken: Kwarandzyey (or Korandje.) All of these non-Arabic languages (with the partial exception of Tamasheq) are indifferently termed *šəlḥa* 'Shelha'.

For native speakers of Arabic, practically all spoken interactions involve the same language. For native speakers of any Shelha, on the other hand, there is a clear diglossic functional division. Shelha is spoken with and around 'insiders', people from the same village or community; Arabic, with and around 'outsiders', making it the default choice for city life, as well as a prerequisite for formal jobs and dealing with the government or the educational system. When Arabs are present, the default choice is Arabic; using Shelha in such contexts is commonly assumed to be—and often is—intended to keep secrets from the listeners. This latter function is strongly developed in many towns, where 'cryptic' non-Arabic argot words may be substituted for Arabic loanwords such as the higher numerals specifically to achieve the goal of secrecy. The default status of Arabic means that, for almost all Shelha-speaking communities, fluency in spoken Arabic is taken for granted, not just for adults but usually for children as well; it is the normal language of interaction with officials, primary school teachers, traders, travellers, or strangers in general, and the lingua franca of the cities. In some

areas, such as Tabelbala, Igli, and Tamentit, Maghrebi Arabic has become the first language of the younger generation, as speakers abandon their mother tongues in the hope of giving their children a head start.

1.2. *Literacy Transmission*

Since the pre-colonial era, Arabic literacy in the *maġribī* script has been transmitted at an elementary level by Qur’anic schools, found in almost every town and attended by children. These use traditional methods of reciting sections of the Qur’ān together and having the children write the text on erasable wooden tablets (*lawḥ*); naturally, their primary focus is on the Qur’ān, rather than on the details of grammar or text production. Religious higher education in the *zaouia*s was and is available for those interested, mainly would-be religious functionaries (*ṭaləb*s in local Arabic), but often requires travel. This traditional education system generated a number of major manuscript collections. These have been documented for the Touat-Gourara region by Bouterfa (2005), and are also found along the Saoura valley, for instance at Kenadsa, Kerzaz, Beni-Ounif (Nadjah 2009) and in the Ksour Mountains, as at Tiout (cf. APS 2006). The content of such libraries appears to be overwhelmingly in Arabic; however, Bouterfa notes the existence of non-Arabic manuscripts in several locations, including Adrar, Lemtarfa, and by implication Maghili. The question of their language and content would be an interesting topic for further investigation. However, the pre-colonial tradition of writing non-Arabic languages in Arabic script that these may represent, if it ever existed, appears unlikely to have left much impact on the new orthographic practices discussed below—if only because the traditional educational system, while still active, is overwhelmingly outnumbered by the new state system.

Following Independence, a network of state schools was established; these are now attended by virtually all children, and are mandatory up to 9th grade. High school is not always available locally in the smallest settlements, requiring some students to board. The primary language of school is Arabic; Maghrebi Arabic is often used as a language of instruction, particular at early stages, alongside Standard Arabic and to a much lesser extent French. Literacy in Standard Arabic, using the pan-Arab *nasḫī* script, is a key goal of education, and to a lesser or greater extent is almost universally attained; literacy in French (and sometimes English) is also taught, but is much more limited in practice.

Since 1995, Berber has been taught in Algerian schools. However, in practice this is of minimal relevance to the region under discussion, and indeed

to most of the country. Regional attitudes towards the idea of teaching Berber are ambivalent. A study of language attitudes in one of the Berber-speaking towns of the Ksour Mountains, Boussemghoun (Benali 2004), revealed a narrow majority (52%) in favour of teaching Berber, yet the town rejected the installation of an office of the *Haut Comité de l'Enseignement de la langue tamazight*, apparently distrusting its politics. As of March 2004, only 16 out of Algeria's 48 *wilaya*s had schools offering any Berber classes (N.H. & S.C. 2009); of these, only one, El Bayadh, is located in the southwest, and there "l' intérêt suscité à l' égard de cet enseignement au début a diminué et après un temps assez court, il s'est éteint entièrement"[2] (R.N. 2009). At no point, therefore, are state school students taught any orthography specifically designed for Berber, much less Songhay. Even in the short-lived exception of El Bayadh, centrally created Berber teaching materials are more likely to reflect the significantly different Kabyle Berber language than to be close to the local Zenati varieties, reducing their potential impact.

Very few works have been published containing texts in the languages of the region; of those few, most are intended for an academic audience rather than for speakers of the languages, and most use Latin script. For Figuig (just across the border in Morocco) a recent dictionary, grammar, and text collection using the Arabic script exists (Sahli 2008), but this work is not readily available in Algeria. The possibility of published works spreading a particular orthography is thus negligible.

How, then, do speakers react to a new domain for literacy?

2. Writing 'Shelha' in New Technologies

2.1. *The Corpus*

The use of Shelha online can be observed on a number of public forums—sites where the readers need not necessarily know the writer. This appears particularly common on regional forums, including:

Youth of Adrar (shababadrar.net)
Sirat Scout Troop Igli (siratigli.yoo7.com)
Igli Township Forums (igli08.com)
Tinerkouk Youth Forum (tinerkouk.banouta.net)

[2] "The interest initially aroused regarding this teaching diminished, and after a rather short time, it was entirely extinguished".

At Boussemghoun (boussemghoun.com)
Djelfa Forums (djelfa.info)

However, examples can also be found on national or international forums, such as En Nahar Online (forum.ennaharonline.com), 4Algeria (4algeria.net), and Rehab Maroc (rehabmaroc.com), and sporadically on blogs, such as Aougrout (aougrout.blogspot.com). A total of 42 webpages from these sites were examined, yielding 389 examples from Igli, 149 from Boussemghoun, 100 for Tamasheq, and 92 for Taznatit.

For its use in the private sphere, my data are limited to Tabelbala; there, they include emails, Skype chats, Facebook messages, and, perhaps most commonly, text messages, as well as notes to me written in my notebook. These data were collected in the course of fieldwork supported by the AHRC; I am grateful to it and to the people I worked with.

2.2. *Orthographic Practices*

While the phonological system of regional Berber and Songhay languages overlaps substantially with Arabic, a number of phonemes have no clear Standard Arabic counterpart, forcing the adoption of orthographic strategies not taught in school.

g is most commonly written as *qāf* (ق):

Kwarandzyey:	اقي ⟨’qy$_1$⟩ ‘PAST’ (*əggạ*), عقرقي ⟨‘qrqy⟩ ‘I fought’ (*ʕa-ggʷərgʷəy*)
Taznatit:	دقيض ⟨dqyḍ⟩ ‘night’ (*dəggiḍ*), تمقنى ⟨tmqny$_1$⟩ ‘head’ (*taməgna*)
Igli:	ازقاغ ⟨’zq’ġ⟩ ‘red’ (*azəggaγ*), تمقنا ⟨tmqn’⟩ ‘head’ (*taməgna*)
Boussemghoun:	تامزقيدة ⟨t’mzqydẗ⟩ ‘mosque’ (*taməzgida*)
Tamasheq:	إقلا ⟨’ʔ$_i$ql’⟩ ‘he went’ (*igla*)

This choice reflects widespread Algerian practice. While absent from Standard Arabic, *g* is phonemic in Maghrebi Arabic as well as in Berber and Songhay, and in most cases reflects an etymological *q*. In personal names and place names, *g* is normally transcribed for official purposes as *q* or as *qāf* with three dots above, as can readily be seen on road signs. The latter alternative is difficult to type, since it is not available on most keyboards. However, I have observed it in handwritten examples, e.g. Kwarandzyey يَمْڨنْڨَا ⟨yam^{0}q$_2$n^{0}q$_2$’⟩ ‘we pray’ (*yə-m-gənga*). Nowhere in the corpus examined were any cases found of *g* being transcribed as *kāf* ك or as *ġayn* غ, or variations thereon. This contrasts strikingly with the practice of both nearby Morocco to the north and Mali to the south, where *g* is normally transcribed as *kāf* ك with three dots (Boogert 1997; Sudlow 2001).

ẓ is typically transcribed as *zāy* ز, as is also common in Algerian practice:

Taznatit:	امزيان ⟨’mzy’n⟩ ‘small’ (*aməẓyan*), تبلكوزت ⟨tblkwzt⟩ ‘[plant species]’ (*tabəlkuẓt*)
Igli:	إزي ⟨’ʔ$_i$zy⟩ ‘gallbladder’ (*iẓi*), تمزوغين ⟨tmzwġyn⟩ ‘ears’ (*timəẓẓuɣin*)
Boussemghoun:	ازور ⟨’zwr⟩ ‘root’ (*aẓwər*)
Tamashek:	اكوز ⟨’kwz⟩ ‘four’ (*əkkoẓ*)

Rather more surprisingly from an Algerian perspective, however, there are also rarer instances where it is transcribed with ظ:

Tamashek:	امظادن ⟨’mḏ’dn⟩ ‘hair’ (*amẓadăn*)
Taznatit:	ظال ⟨ḏ’l⟩ ‘to pray’ (*ẓall*), لاظ ⟨l’ḏ⟩ ‘hunger’ (*laẓ*)

The pronunciation *ẓ* for ظ is common in Egyptian pronunciations of Standard Arabic, so this may reflect Middle Eastern influence. However, Kossmann & Elghamis (this volume) observe the same phenomenon elsewhere in Tuareg, so it may reflect a wider southern Saharan tradition.

Outside of Tabelbala, attested renderings of affricates follow the common Algerian strategy of separating them into two consonants:

Igli:	اهتشا ⟨’htš’⟩ ‘tomorrow’ (*ahətša*)
Boussemghoun:	ميتش ⟨mytš⟩ ‘seven’ (*mitš*)

In Tabelbala, however, regular sound shifts have turned etymological *t*/*d* into *ts*/*dz* in many contexts, and the shift of *t* to *ts* is shared with Arabic as spoken in the regional centre Bechar. For *ts*, the etymologically correct *tā’* ت is thus consistently preferred, e.g. ايتي ⟨’yty⟩ ‘they said’ (*i-ttsi*). However, for *dz* local Arabic offers no exact equivalent. Some speakers prefer etymological *dāl* د, which does not permit the affrication to be distinguished, e.g. ندوغ ⟨ndwġ⟩ ‘so that’ (*ndzuɣ*); one even added three dots underneath to permit the distinction, writing قَاتْنْࢮِاَ ⟨qa$_2$’t^{0}n^{0}d$_6$a’⟩ ‘put down here’ (*gʷạ-tə-ndza*). Others, however, prefer to write *tā’* ت, thus sacrificing the voicing in order to represent the affrication: أنتاني ⟨’ʔnt’ny⟩ ‘and you’ (*ndza ni*), نتي ⟨nty$_1$⟩ ‘you did’ (*nə-ddza*), لقفرتسي ⟨lqfrtsy⟩ ‘the key to which’ (*ləqfər=dz=si*).

Of the languages under discussion, labiovelarization carries a significant phonemic load only in Kwarandzyey—and there, younger semi-speakers typically drop it. It may be left unmarked, e.g. كاراسي ⟨k’r’sy⟩ ‘to Kwara’ (*kʷạrạ=si*); marked only through vocalization using a *ḍamma*, e.g. يقُّش

⟨yaq^{2}us^{0}⟩ ‘we slaughtered’ (*yə-qq^{w}əs*); or transcribed using a *wāw* ۉ, reflecting its effects on the following vowel, e.g. كۉرا ⟨kwr’⟩ ‘Kwara’ (*k^{w}ạṛạ*).

Gemination is phonemic in Standard Arabic, as in all the languages under discussion. However, while the Arabic script provides a ready-made way to handle them—the optional *šadda* diacritic—the morphophonemics of Arabic motivates another way of writing word-initial coronal geminates: as *al-* ال plus the consonant geminated. All three of these possibilities are attested, although the commonest, as expected in unvocalized texts, is leaving it unmarked:

Unmarked (default option):

Taznatit:	طف ⟨ṭf⟩ ‘to grasp’ (*ṭṭəf*)
Boussemghoun:	تزَقّه تَملالث ⟨tzaquah tamal’lt^{0}⟩ ‘white room’ (*tazəqqa taməllalt*), ءاغالن ⟨ʔ’ġ’ln⟩ ‘shoulders’ (*iɣallən*)

šadda:

Igli:	إيلّي ⟨’ʔ$_{i}$yl^{w}iy⟩ ‘daughter’ (*illi*)
Tamasheq:	اتّام ⟨’t^{w}’m⟩ ‘eight’ (*əttam*)

Initial الـ (limited to Arabic loans in corpus):

Igli:	الجاوجة ⟨’lǧ’wǧẗ⟩ ‘second’ (*žžawža*)

A fourth possibility is also discussed briefly, if scarcely used:

> ولكن هناك من يرى أن كل ما ينضق يكتب بدون استثناء ... فالتشديد مثلا يكتب بدلا من وضع حركة التشديد على الحرف ... مثل ما في كلمة: (إسسرمغت) فالأصل إسّرمغت—azawazd
>
> ‘But some consider that everything that is pronounced should be written without exception ... so gemination for example would be written instead of by placing the *šadda* marker on the letter ... like the following word: إسسرمغت ⟨’ʔ$_{i}$ssrmġt⟩ (*issrmɣt*), corresponding to original إسّرمغت ⟨’ʔ$_{i}$s^{w}rmġt⟩—azawazd’ (http://www.djelfa.info/vb/showthread.php?t=99925)

Full vowels are almost always written plene when final or in an open penultimate syllable, and in many cases are written plene throughout:

Kwarandzyey:	مباهوراكا ⟨mb’hwr’k’⟩ ‘you have entered it’ (*n-ba-hhur a-ka*)
Igli:	أفردو ⟨’ʔfrdw⟩ ‘pestle’ (*afərdu*), ايتقاما ⟨’ytq’m’⟩ ‘he sits’ (*it-qama*)
Taznatit:	تغوني ⟨tġwny⟩ ‘canal’ (*tiɣuni*)

However, in closed syllables or position before the penultimate, they are often left unmarked:

Igli: تمزغت ⟨tmzġt⟩ 'ear' (*tamǝẓẓuɣt*)
Taznatit: تمطوت ⟨tmṭwt⟩ 'woman' (*tamǝṭṭut*)
Kwarandzyey: المطارك ⟨'lmṭ'rk⟩ 'in the airport' (*ǝlmạṭạṛ=ka*)

The schwa, etymologically corresponding in Maghrebi Arabic to the short vowels of Classical Arabic, is normally left unmarked:

Igli: أفردو ⟨'ʔfrdw⟩ 'pestle' (*afǝrdu*)
Taznatit: سن ⟨sn⟩ 'two' (*sǝn*)

In some cases, the strategies seen above are supplemented by vocalization:

Kwarandzyey: أَبِفْهَمْ ⟨'ʔabif^{0}ham^0⟩ 'he understands' (*a-b-ifhǝm*)
Tamasheq: تِكَدَيْتْ ⟨tikaday^{0}t^0⟩ 'stone' (*tekădăyt*)
Igli: مِيْلُوز ⟨miy^{0}luwz⟩ 'hungry person' (*miluẓ*)
Boussemghoun: تزَقُه تَمَلالْتْ ⟨tzaquah tamal'lt^0⟩ 'white room' (*tazǝqqa tamǝllalt*)

In such cases, schwa, with no single unambiguous counterpart in Standard Arabic, may be represented either by *fatḥa* or by *sukūn*:

Igli: أَنْبَــــــــدُوَ ⟨'ʔanb^{0}duwa⟩ 'summer' (*anǝbdu*), تِزَمْتْ ⟨tizam^{0}t^0⟩ 'road' (*tizǝmmt*), اَبَــرْكَـــــان ⟨'abar^{0}ka'n⟩ 'black' (*abǝrkan*)
Tamasheq: ⟨'ʔ$_i$šanna'wan^0⟩ إِشَنَّاوَنْ 'sky' (*išǝnnawăn*)
Kwarandzyey: تَمْزْقِيدَاسْ ⟨tam^{0}z^{0}q$_2$iyda's^0⟩ 'to the mosque' (*tsamǝzgida=s*), قَاتْنْدِا ⟨q$_2$a't^{0}n^{0}d$_6$a'⟩ 'put down here' (*gʷạ-tǝ-ndza*)
Igli: ⟨'ʔm^{0}rṣiy^{0}d^0⟩ أَمْرْصِيدْ 'date pollen' (*amǝrṣid*), إِغْضْ ⟨'ʔ$_i$ġ^{0}ḍ^0⟩ 'ashes' (*iɣǝd*)

Final *-a* is written in any of three ways; the distinction is morphologically motivated in Standard Arabic, but the relevant morphology corresponds to nothing in the Shelha being written:

-a = ى:

Kwarandzyey: ⟨'qy$_1$⟩ اقى 'PAST' (*ǝggạ*), نمبغكى ⟨nmbġky$_1$⟩ 'on your head' (*nǝn bǝnɣ=ka*)
Taznatit: تمقنى ⟨tmqny$_1$⟩ 'head' (*tamǝgna*), تعاطى ⟨t^{ʿ}'ṭy$_1$⟩ 'frond' (*taʕaṭṭa*)
Igli: اغنجى ⟨'ġnǧy$_1$⟩ 'ladle' (*aɣǝnja*)

-a = ا:

Kwarandzyey: عقارانا ⟨‘q’r’n’⟩ ‘I found it’ (*ʕaggaṛana*), سكايبكا ⟨sk’ybk’⟩ ‘on Skype’ (*skayb=ka*)
Taznatit: ادغا ⟨’dġ’⟩ ‘stone’ (*adγa*)
Igli: الدسا ⟨’lds’⟩ ‘liver’ (*tsa*), اهتشا ⟨’htš’⟩ ‘tomorrow’ (*ahətša*), تمقنا ⟨tmqn’⟩ ‘head’ (*taməgna*)
Tamasheq: تاغما ⟨t’ġm’⟩ ‘thigh’ (*taγma*)

-*a* = ة (rarer—nouns only?):

Kwarandzyey: تلخبة ⟨tlẖbẗ⟩ ‘how are you?’ (*tə̣lləxbạ*)
Igli: أغردة ⟨’ʔġrdẗ⟩ ‘mouse’ (*aγərda*)
Boussemghoun: تامزقيدة ⟨t’mzqydẗ⟩ ‘mosque’ (*taməzgida*)

What conclusions can be drawn? There are few if any signs of the stabilization of community-specific norms; instead, the space of orthographic choices shows remarkable homogeneity across the region. The most consistent and widespread non-Standard Arabic conventions, notably ق for *g* and ز for *ẓ*, apply throughout the region irrespective of language, and are precisely those which correspond to official usage in the transcription of personal names and place names. Where Standard Arabic offers a range of different orthographic possibilities, all the main possibilities are attested in most of the languages examined. The absence of data on Arabic-script transcription in the traditional educational system makes it difficult to judge whether any continuity is present, but the use of ق for *g* suggests discontinuity; both in southern Morocco and in Mali, *g* is normally transcribed as ڭ, and, given the region’s historical trade links with those areas, one would expect the same convention to have been original here. In general, it appears that community-specific orthographic norms are weak or nonexistent, and traditional education network norms are unlikely to be being reflected in new media practice; even though non-Arabic local languages are absent from education, the orthographic choices for them are being determined primarily by those of the state. The possible exception of ظ for *ẓ* would merit closer examination.

Another factor with a strong impact on orthographic choices is technical constraints, as also found elsewhere for instant messaging by Lee (2007). In hand-writing, the nature of the Arabic script facilitates the creation of new characters by adding dots; at least one such character, *gāf* ڨ, is familiar throughout Algeria, and others, such as *pā’* پ, are known more sporadically through contact with other countries. But, while many of these can be typed on a computer by a knowledgeable user, the average user is often unable, and even more often unmotivated, to type any character not found

on a standard Arabic keyboard layout; and on a mobile, depending on the model, doing so may simply be impossible. Hence, though the new character strategy has several attestations in the small hand-written corpus, it has not a single attestation in the electronic one. A less conspicuous effect may be the paucity of vocalization, in contrast with, for example, traditional manuscripts of the Sous (van den Boogert 1997); while this may reflect Modern Standard Arabic convention, it may also be linked to the fact that most keyboards used locally do not mark the location of vowel marks, and not all users realise that these can in fact be typed. In brief, the means of production affects the orthographic outcome.

2.2. *Why is Shelha Written?*

2.2.1. *Public Sphere: Metalinguistic Usage*

In public contexts, where outsiders can potentially read it, Shelha is most widely written for metalinguistic purposes. One minor case is explaining place names, in the context of local history:

> سميت جل القصور بالمنطقة ككل من اصل بربري ... قصر تبلكوزة: وتبلكوزت تعني نبات او عشبة العقة لما كانت ولا زالت تكثر بهذه المنطقة خاصة منطقة آغاد (طاهري ع)
>
> 'Most ksours in the area all have names of Berber origin ... Tabelkoza: *tabəlkuẓt* means the *ʕagga* plant/herb, because it was and is common in this area, especially around Aghad (Tahri A, 22/12/2008—Taznatit)'
> (http://tinerkouk.banouta.net/montada-f139/topic-t127.htm)

> أوسع حجرة في الزاوية فهي الحَجرة المُسماة تَزَقُّه تَملالتْ و معناها بالعربية الغرفة البيضاء
>
> 'The biggest room in the zaouia is the room called *tazəqqa taməllalt*, which means "the white room"' (Boussemghoun)
> (http://www.boussemghoun.com/ar/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=50&Itemid=58)

The commonest purpose overall, however, is teaching to non-speakers. In several cases, the target audience is Arabic speakers, usually from the same broad region, often finding an audience:

> اخواني اخواتي اعضاء منتدى شباب ادرار يسرني ان اشارككم ببعض الكلمات من اللهجة التارقية منبع اللهجلت البربرية. من تعلم لغة قوم امن شرهم (الرجل الأزرق)
>
> 'Brothers and sisters, members of the Adrar Youth Forum, I am pleased to share with you some words from the Tuareg dialect, the wellspring of the Berber dialects. He who learns a people's language is safe from their evil' (Blue Man, 04/09/2009)
> (http://www.shababadrar.net/vb/showthread.php?t=41444)

السلام عليكم الاخت وردة الصحراء نعم يمكن ان نعلمك اللهجة الزناتية وعلى الرحب والسعة مادمت جادة ولديك رغبة في ذلك وشكرا.أويد فوسنم = هاتي يدك (mahlal)

‘Salam alaykum sister “Desert Rose”. Yes we can teach you the Zenati dialect, with welcome and generosity, as long as it’s serious and you long to do it, and thank you. *Awid fus-ənnəm* = Give us your hand’ (mahlal, 21/10/2009) (http://www.djelfa.info/vb/showthread.php?t=155827)

Occasionally the target audience includes other Berber speakers: in the example below, a Semghouni replies to a post listing words in Tashelhiyt of the Sous (Morocco) adding Semghouni equivalents:

أَمَزِيلْ = الحداد = ناض ... هده اللهجة تاشلحيت (بوسمغون) الجزائر (algoun)

‘*Amzil* [Moroccan] = blacksmith = *naḍ* [Boussemghoun] ... This is the Tashelhiyt dialect of Boussemghoun, Algeria’ (algoun, 09/02/2010) (http://www.rehabmaroc.com/vb/showthread.php?p=120202)

More rarely, the target audience is other speakers of the same language. Sporadic cases are attested for Boussemghoun, notably the posts of brahim1664, explaining rare Berber words in terms of more familiar ones, often loans, for instance:

احموش=اغراف نتلاخت=الفخار

‘*aħmuš* = *aɣəṛṛaf* [ladle, < Arabic] *n tlaxt* = *əlfəxxaṛ* [pottery < Arabic]’ (28/07/2009) (http://www.boussemghoun.com/board/viewtopic.php?f=17&t=21&sid=5dfe40b1dfc444897f161f3674dace7f)

The only extensive example of this is Igli. The case of Igli is exceptional enough to deserve particular attention. Igli boasts a relatively active forum made for and by citizens of the town, started out by the local Scouts branch. At the same time, the ‘Shelha’ Berber of Igli (*tabəldit*) is no longer spoken to children in many families, and younger Glaouis often have little or no command of it. Many forum members show a strong interest in recording and revitalizing the language, primarily by teaching vocabulary:

أقدم إليكم اليوم هذا المشروع الذي ينص على إنشاء قاموس ”عربية-شلحة“ للحفاظ على هذا اللغة (شيماء)

I present to you today this project: the establishment of an “Arabic-Shelha” dictionary to preserve our language (Shayma, 07/02/2009) (http://www.iglio8.com/vb/showthread.php?t=86; as of 17 July 2010, the resulting dictionary, http://www.iglio8.com/vb/forumdisplay.php?f=82, had attracted 193 postings)

هذا الموضوع هو عبارة عن مجموعة من الحلقات ففي كل حلقة تقدم لكم مجموعة من الكلمات قي لهجتنا الغالية والتي أستبدلت قي عصرنا الخالي بأخرى سواءا فرنسية الأصل أو عامية. (عميور محمد)

> 'This topic will consist of a series of posts each presenting a set of words in our dear dialect which have been replaced in our times with others, whether French or dialectal Arabic' (Amiouer Mohamed, 27/08/2008)
> (http://siratigli.yoo7.com/montada-f12/topic-t270.htm)

One spin-off is the development of vocabulary competitions, allowing learners and semi-speakers to demonstrate their abilities:

> من سيكون الرابح: أكبر كلمات بالشلحة مع معانيها (المشرف العام)
>
> 'Who will win? Greatest Shelha words with their meanings' (Admin, 27/08/2008) (http://siratigli.yoo7.com/montada-f12/topic-t161.htm)

> اشرح الكلمة: لواشون تغنجايت تقسريت (bih20)
>
> 'Explain the word: *lwašun, taγənjayt, taqəsrit*' [gives answers later] (bih20, 18/06/2009) (http://www.iglio8.com/vb/showthread.php?t=282)

> اتحدى كل اضياف المنتدى ان ياتوا بمعنى هذه الكلمة الشلحية. ارجو التفاعل ان كنتم شلحيين و تدعون الشلحة: تمزراعيـــن (عبود بلخير)
>
> 'I challenge all forum members to give the meaning of this Shelha word. Please respond if you are Shelha and considered Shelha: *timəzraʕin*' (Abboud Belkheir, 17/06/2009)
> (http://siratigli.yoo7.com/montada-f12/topic-t3455.htm)

Apart from vocabulary, efforts are also made to record and share proverbs:

> حكم الشلحة لها تأثير ان ترجمت بالعربية نقص تأثيرها. و منها البداية ... شك ربى دنش أدنغا (عبد الهادي بهاب)
>
> 'Shelha proverbs have an impact; if translated into Arabic, their impact lessens. So here's a start: *šək ṛəbbi d nəš ad nγa*' (Abdelhadi Bahab, 31/08/2008)
> (http://siratigli.yoo7.com/montada-f12/topic-t347.htm)

> قال القدامى القلاويين عن رمضان. "لعشرة تامزوارت تون نيسان. لعشرة الجاوجة تون نلغمان. لعشرة تالتة تون نغيال" ولقد اعتمدوا في تصنيفهم هذا على كيفية وسرعة مرور الايام خصوصا في فصل الصيف. ونترك لزملائنا الكرام شرف شرح هذا القول (sarab)
>
> 'Glaoui old-timers used to say of Ramadan: "*lʕašṛa taməzwarut tun n isan, lʕašṛa žžawža tun n iləγman, lʕašṛa ttalta tun n iγyal.*" They based their classification on the nature and speed of the passing of days especially in the summer. We leave to our respected comrades the honour of explaining this proverb' (sarab, 29/08/2009)
> (http://www.iglio8.com/vb/showthread.php?t=7669)

2.2.2. *Private Sphere: Phatic Communication*

When private communications (email, Facebook, Skype chat, text messages, written notes) are examined, a quite different picture emerges. The corpus examined is limited to Tabelbala, but the messages consist overwhelmingly of greetings, inquiries after people’s health and situations—phatic communication, in short, as in the following Facebook exchange (abridged):

السلام عليكم خبارك شوى يك ها سضانى ...

‘Salam alaykum. How are you? No problems? …’

... بغنى هاسكى والو ايرش شوى او خلاصتهلى نمبغكى

‘… No rain has fallen—it drizzled a little, that’s all. Take care of yourself’

The use of the vernacular in such cases may be compared to the use of colloquial Arabic, not usually written, in similar contexts. as described for instant messaging in Gulf Arabic by Palfreyman & Khalil (2003).

3. Conclusions

The corpus examined suggests that ‘Ajami’ writing is a natural side effect of Arabic literacy, which can show significant homogeneity across individuals and languages without the practice itself ever having been institutionally taught. It confirms that, in public contexts, Arabic remains the default choice, with ‘Shelha’ reserved almost exclusively for presenting language-specific form rather than translatable meaning. At least for Tabelbala, on the other hand, it suggests that the sociolinguistic division of labour between Arabic and ‘Shelha’ is partly replicated in written usage: in private communications, ‘Shelha’ is used for phatic communication, and, while not the unmarked choice that it would be in comparable spoken contexts, can still be used to emphasize solidarity.

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SECTION III

WEST AFRICA

OLD KANEMBU AND KANURI IN ARABIC SCRIPT: PHONOLOGY THROUGH THE GRAPHIC SYSTEM*

Dmitry Bondarev

1. Introduction

1.1. *Expansion of Kanem and Borno and Spread of Kanuri*

Kanuri and Kanembu are closely related languages spoken around Lake Chad by about four million people. These closely-related languages (considered dialects by some) belong to the Saharan family of the macro Nilo-Saharan language phylum. Historically, Kanuri developed during the westward migration of the Kanembu-speaking population from the ancient Islamic Kanem kingdom northeast of Lake Chad to the Borno Sultanate east of the lake. According to the chronicles of the rulers of Kanem and Borno (Lange 1977), this population shift was taking place since the 14th century onwards, resulting in a wide spread of Kanuri as the dominant language in the east of the lake. The expansion of Kanuri over the area of the Central Sahel accompanied successive military campaigns carried out by the Sultans of Borno, who were successful in the acquisition of new resources and in spreading Islam. Kanuri retained its widespread and dominant role well into the beginning of the 19th century when the Sokoto caliphate was established, with Hausa as a language of wider communication. Since then, Kanuri has been retreating to become a localized regional language only spoken in the core area of the former Borno Sultanate.

Centuries of expansion and interaction with the western, southwestern, and southern territories including Hausa States, Nupe- and Yorubalands, and the Fulani-speaking Adamawa (Fombina), have left various linguistic,

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religious, and demographic traces of the Kanuri presence in the region.[1] The Borno *ʿulamāʾ* (scholars) who had a practice of establishing scholarly settlements, *mallamti*, in the vicinity of big cities, migrated and settled in many Hausa-, Yoruba-, and Nupe-speaking areas, such as the Hausa city Katsina, Nupe settlements Enagi and Kutigi, and the Yoruba city of Ilorin (Gazali 2005: 108–112; Reichmuth 2011). Many of these places have preserved manuscripts written at the time of the Borno sultanate. The Qurʾān copies annotated in Old Kanembu—an archaic variety of Kanuri—are known to have been produced in the predominantly Hausa- and Fulani-speaking cities of Katsina, Birnin Kebbi, Yola, and others.

The earliest dated evidence for Old Kanembu in Arabic script has come to light in interlinear and marginal commentaries to the Qurʾān supposedly written in the old Borno capital Birni Gazargamu. The dated manuscript (MS 3ImI) has a very complex structure of intermingled commentaries both in vernacular and Arabic, and it is the latter that has a date of completion: 1080 (AH)/1669 (Bivar 1960; Bondarev 2006a). The Old Kanembu glosses were written prior to the Arabic commentaries, as is evident from how the passages in Arabic are written around the Kanembu words. There is an older copy of the Qurʾān manuscript (MS 2ShK) annotated the same way as MS 3ImI, which is believed to date back to at least the early 17th or, possibly, 16th century (Bivar 1960).

The language represented in the Qurʾān manuscripts is an archaic variety of Kanuri, called variously (and interchangeably) 'Old Kanembu' or 'the language of the (Qurʾanic) glosses (LG)' (see Bondarev 2005a, b, 2006a, b, *inter alia*). It is this archaic variety in its early written attestation which is the main subject of the present article.

Before turning to the grammatological features of the Old Kanembu writing tradition, I will first outline its sociolinguistic peculiarities and then give a brief account of the texts in other varieties of Kanuri written in Arabic-based script, locally known as Ajami.

1.2. *Old Kanembu as Revealed in the Qurʾān Manuscripts*

Old Kanembu of the Qurʾān manuscripts does not just represent the earliest evidence of a written language of the Borno sultanate (16th–early 19th

[1] Kanuri influence is variously reflected in administrative terms and titles, terminology for calligraphy and Qurʾanic studies, as well as in the presence of minority Kanuri communities in the cities and Kanuri farming settlements.

centuries), but rather reflects a variety of Kanembu of the Kanem Sultanate (10th–15th centuries). In other words, Old Kanembu was not contemporaneous with Kanuri as spoken in Borno at the time the oldest manuscripts were created (16–17th century) and had already become a specialized language used for Qurʾān interpretation (see Bondarev 2006b, in press, for further discussion).

As a medium of teaching the meaning of the Qurʾān in ancient Kanem prior to the 15th century, Old Kanembu became highly specialized in that it was solely used for translation from Arabic. As a result of its restricted function, the language used in the Qurʾān glosses did not reflect the development of spoken Kanembu and Kanuri of the Kanem and Borno age and retained grammatical structures from different time stages of Old Kanembu and Borno Kanuri.

Despite an extensive production of Qurʾān manuscripts annotated in Old Kanembu during the Borno Sultanate period (Bondarev 2006b), we are currently only aware of less than twenty manuscripts of this kind; some are still kept in state and private collections across (mainly northern) Nigeria (Maiduguri, Kaduna, Jos, Yola, Birnin Kebbi, and Ilorin) while others, including the above mentioned Qurʾān manuscripts MS 2ShK and the dated MS 3ImI, have disappeared during the last fifty years. Most of these manuscripts are now available in digital form deposited at the SOAS Library (inventory number MS 380808-D, http://digital.info.soas.ac.uk/10563/#), amounting to about 4,000 digital pages spread over eight copies of Qurʾān manuscripts and fourteen texts on Islamic education, jurisprudence, and Arabic grammar (see Fig. 1). There is also undoubtedly a vast number of yet unknown manuscripts in private libraries in Nigeria and Niger, which may eventually come to light.

1.3. *Old Kanembu in the Form of Its Descendant* Tarjumo

A modernized variety of Old Kanembu has been preserved in modern-day Borno in a form of language known locally as *Tarjumo* (< Arabic *tarǧama* ‘to translate, interpret’),[2] which functions as an exegetical language for Kanuri-speaking Islamic scholars. *Tarjumo* shows a close grammatical and lexical affinity to Old Kanembu and is unintelligible to most speakers of Modern

[2] The etymology of this term is dealt with in a forthcoming article by Dmitry Bondarev and Abba Tijani, “Performance of multilayered literacy: Tarjumo of the Kanuri Muslim scholars”.



Fig. 1 The Qurʾān manuscript with annotations in Old Kanembu and Arabic. End of *Sūrat an-Nāziʿāt*, beginning of *Sūrat ʿAbasa* (Q. 79/37–80/24). London, SOAS, Photographic and digital collection MS 380808, MS 3ImI. Dated 1080/1669.

Kanuri (MK). Although *Tarjumo* mainly functions in the oral domain as a medium for translating and interpreting written Arabic texts like the Qurʾān and other religious texts, it is usually put down in writing by students studying it or scholars excelling in their proficiency in reciting the Arabic texts accompanied by *Tarjumo* translation.

As an indispensable translational medium in the context of traditional Qur'anic education in Borno, *Tarjumo* texts represent an open corpus that exists in mnemonic notes in the students and teachers' textbooks and notebooks. Sometimes anthologies of early and contemporary Arabic texts by famous Arabic and Borno scholars are annotated in *Tarjumo* and disseminated by cheap offset print reproduction.

1.4. *Ajami Manuscripts Written in Archaic Kanuri*

Genealogical and historical texts variously dating from the late 18th to early 20th century CE differ from the texts in Old Kanembu and *Tarjumo* in many aspects, including language, content, and function. These texts are written in a number of varieties of Kanuri spoken in the central lands of the Borno Sultanate, approximately corresponding to the stretch of land from the old Borno capital Birni Gazargamu (1488–1808), situated on the southern bank of the Komadugu Yobe River, to the modern Borno State capital Maiduguri.

One type of archaic Kanuri texts constitutes the so-called *gargam* genre: genealogical lists of the Kanem-Borno Sayfawa dynasty, covering about 900 years of successive rulers (*mai*'s). The *gargams* were most probably based on oral tradition and served as a mnemonic template for fuller and more detailed versions of the chronicles of the *mai*'s of Kanem-Borno.[3]

Another type of archaic Kanuri spoken in the early 19th century is attested in various historical and cultural accounts written down by the Borno *ʿulamāʾ* on commission by the British colonial officers. These documents are very scarce and were only published once (Benton 1911).

Both *gargams* and Benton's texts reveal a certain influence from the Old Kanembu manuscripts, especially in the type of script, page layout, and some uniformity in spelling conventions.

[3] See Bondarev (in press) for the linguistic and palaeographic properties of *gargams*.

1.5. *Ajami in Modern Kanuri*

The rich history of writing in Old Kanembu and Kanuri paradoxically contrasts with the present position of Kanuri among the largest spoken languages of Nigeria. Spoken by about three and a half million people in northeastern Nigeria and half a million in Niger, Chad, and Cameroon, Kanuri barely maintains its status as a written language. Modern Kanuri written in Arabic script is restricted to a small number of publications (in effect, facsimile reproductions of hand-written manuscripts) on the basics of Islam, such as versified guidance for performing ablution and prayers. Kanuri in Latin-based script has a wider function fostered by the University of Maiduguri, the Kashim Ibrahim College of education, Maiduguri, and the Centre for the Study of Nigerian Languages, Bayero University, Kano, as well as by a couple of enthusiast writers (e.g. Baba Gana Wakil).

Sporadic initiatives to establish a standardized Arabic-based orthography for Modern Kanuri have so far brought no result.

2. Old Kanembu Ajami

The writing system as represented in the manuscripts spans a period of about 400 years, i.e. from the 17th to the late 20th centuries, and there is no clear borderline between the older and later manuscripts in terms of graphic representation. They are best understood as a continuum of overlapping approaches applied by the scribes in encoding the phonology of Old Kanembu/*Tarjumo*. In dealing with this continuum, an optimal solution would be to study the manuscripts in restricted chronological and palaeographic groups, as has been done for the three Borno Qurʾān manuscripts MS 2ShK, MS 3ImI, and MS 1YM, which were the baseline for the current digital collection.

Although Old Kanembu and *Tarjumo* are conservative varieties of the language, they have been changing in time, especially at the level of phonology which reflected changes in spoken dialects. In terms of written representation, this is reflected in changes in the frequency distribution of graphemes used. For example, historically, both Old Kanembu and archaic Kanuri did not have palatal consonants—they appeared only at a later stage (approximately during the 19th century) due to palatalization before front vowels. This sound change is reflected in Ajami writing. That is, in earlier manuscripts the Arabic grapheme ش representing the palatal /ʃ/ in Classical Arabic (CA) was used almost exclusively for Arabic loanwords with /ʃ/, e.g. *shakka* 'doubt', whereas in later manuscripts this grapheme became widely

used for native words which had undergone palatalization (سِيم ⟨siym⟩ → شِيم ⟨šiym⟩ = /sîm/ → /shîm/ 'eye'[4]).

I will focus here on the oldest group of manuscripts—the Old Borno Qurʾāns. Special attention will be given to MS 1YM, which has the largest volume of Old Kanembu glosses and therefore has been the primary source of linguistic analysis.

2.1. *Spelling Conventions in Old Kanembu*

The Old Kanembu glosses manifest very regular spelling conventions within a single manuscript. Different scribes who took part in writing the glosses in each manuscript observed these manuscript-specific spelling rules. However, orthographic practice differs from manuscript to manuscript. For example, the grapheme ث ⟨ṯ⟩ does occur in MS 1YM, but not in MS 2ShK, where س ⟨s⟩ is used in the corresponding lexemes:

سِكِ ⟨siki⟩ /siki/ (MS 2ShK)	ثِيغِي ⟨ṯiyġiy⟩ /ṯsígí/ (MS 1YM)	'there is'
سَ ⟨sa⟩ /sa/ (MS 2ShK)	ثَ ⟨ṯa⟩ /ṯsa/ (MS 1YM)	'they say'
سْرَكُو ⟨s^{0}rakuw⟩ /srakó/ (MS 2ShK)	ثْرَغُو ⟨ṯ^{0}raġuw⟩ /ṯsragó/ (MS 1YM)	'he wants'
سَتَلكِي ⟨satalkiy⟩ /satalkí/ (MS 2ShK)	ثُتُلُوغِي ⟨ṯutuluwġiy⟩ /ṯsutulúgí/ (MS 1YM)	'he took out'

It is possible that the spellings of Old Kanembu of MS 1YM and MS 2ShK were influenced by the different Kanuri or Kanembu dialects spoken by the scribes in everyday life. These manuscript-specific spellings may indicate that the Borno Qurʾāns were created in different places and not only in the capital city Birni Gazargamu. On the other hand, some orthographic conventions are apparently universal, such as the personal pronouns هُو ⟨huw⟩ /hú/ 'I', نِي ⟨niy⟩ /ní/ 'you', and تِي ⟨tiy⟩ /tí/ 'he; she', to mention just a few. This corroborates the hypothesis that the Old Kanembu of Borno Qurʾāns represents a kind of standard, literary form of the language, transcending the dialects (Bondarev, in press).

In the following two sections, I will describe the phonemic features of the Old Kanembu graphemic system and discuss the most problematic grapheme/phoneme correspondences as reconstructed for the language of

4 High tone is indicated with an acute accent (e.g. *á*), low tone is unmarked, and falling with circumflex (*â*). Reconstructed phonemic forms in LG data are given in slanted brackets without asterisk throughout the article.

the Borno Qur'ān glosses.[5] The methodological principles used for establishing these correspondences are as follows:

i. Analysis of grapheme frequencies and grapheme alternations, both manuscript-internally and across groups of manuscripts
ii. Calculation of ratios of spelling errors against spelling conventions
iii. Consideration of phonological data retrieved from the manuscripts in the context of phonological change in Kanuri as attested by previous scholarship

3. Vowel Graphemes

The Old Kanembu/LG scribes used the following Arabic-based graphemes for vocalic representation: *fatḥa* ◌َ for /a/; *kasra* ◌ِ for /i/; *ḍamma* ◌ُ for /o/ and /u/; *sukūn* ◌ْ possibly for /ə/ (*sukūn* represents /ə/ in *Tarjumo*, also see Mustapha 1987: 128); and *ʾimāla* ◌ٜ for /e/.

(1) Representation of vowels in Old Kanembu

fatḥa = /a/, *ḍamma* = /u/: كَتغُ ⟨katuġu⟩ /katugu/ 'a lie'
fatḥa = /a/, *kasra* = /i/, and *ḍamma* = /o/: كَسِمُلَنْه ⟨kasimulan^{0}h⟩ /kasimolan/ 'on the path'
ʾimāla = /e/ يه ⟨-yeh⟩ /ye/ '[agent marker]'
sukūn = /ə/:

closed syllables:
كْنتَاغْ ⟨k^{0}ntaʾġ^{0}⟩ /kəntágə/ ~ Modern Kanuri /kəntáɣə/ 'new moon'
ثْلْمْ ⟨t̲^{0}l^{0}m⟩ /t̰sələ́m/ ~ Modern Kanuri /sələ́m/ 'black'

open syllables:
كْرَامِ ⟨k^{0}raʾmi⟩ /kərámi/ ~ Modern Kanuri /kərámi/ 'younger sibling'
ثْمَاغِي ⟨t̲^{0}maʾġiy⟩ /t̰səmágí/ ~ Modern Kanuri /səmóyí/ 'he received'

The so-called 'weak' letters *ʾalif*, *yāʾ*, and *wāw* are used, in combination with other diacritics, to indicate supra-segmental features like high and falling tones (see discussion below).

(2) Representation of tone in Old Kanembu

fatḥa + *ʾalif* ◌َا ⟨-aʾ⟩: فَاتْ ⟨faʾtu⟩ /fáto/ 'house'

[5] For a comprehensive analysis of the Old Kanembu phonology see Bondarev (forthcoming), and for the reconstruction of affricates and fricatives Bondarev (2005a).

kasra + *yāʾ* ◌ِي ⟨-iy⟩: كِيدَ ⟨kiyda⟩ /kída/ ‘work’
ḍamma + *wāw* ◌ُو ⟨-uw⟩: كَبُو ⟨kabuw⟩ /kabú/ ‘day’
ḍamma + *wāw*, i.e. ◌ُو ⟨-uw⟩: غُثُو ⟨ġuṯuw⟩ /goṯsó/ ‘every, each’
ʾimāla + *yāʾ* + dagger *ʾalif* above, i.e. ◌ٜيٰ ⟨-ey^{a}⟩: غُلٜيٰ ⟨ġuley^{a}⟩ /gulé/ ‘say!’ (MS 1YM)

In word-initial position only the phonemes /a/ and /i/ occur (as in modern Kanuri phonotactics). The initial vowels are represented by a diacritic combined with either *ʾalif*, *hamza* on top of *ʾalif* or a disconnected *hamza*:

(3) Representation of word-initial vowels in Old Kanembu

ʾalif + *fatḥa* اَـ ⟨ʾa-⟩: اَغُو ⟨ʾaġuw⟩ /agó/ ‘thing’ (MS 1YM)
ʾalif + *hamza* + *fatḥa* أَـ ⟨ʾʔa-⟩: أَغُو ⟨ʾʔaġuw⟩ /agó/ ‘thing’ (MS 2ShK)
ʾalif + *kasra* اِـ ⟨ʾi-⟩: اِتَا ⟨ʾitaʾ⟩ /itá/ [prohibitive] (MS 1YM), اِبُوغُو ⟨ʾibuwġuw⟩ /ibúgó/ ‘eat! [plural]’
hamza + *fatḥa* + *ʾalif* ءَاـ ⟨ʔaʾ-⟩ = *ʾā*-: ءَالَرُ ⟨ʔaʾlaru⟩ /álaro/ ‘to Allah’ (MS 1YM)

The vowels /e/, /o/, and /u/ do not occur in word-initial position. The same constraint also applies to Modern Kanuri with one exception, *uwu* ‘five’, which has lost the initial consonant /h/, cf. LG /húku/ > Modern Kanuri /úwu/.

There is a word-final combination of *ʾalif* + *sukūn* following *ḍamma* + *wāw* ◌ُواْ ⟨uwʾ^{0}⟩, which is used in manuscripts MS 1YM and MS 2ShK for distinguishing final /-ó/, e.g. اَغُواْ ⟨ʾaġuwʾ^{0}⟩ /agó/ ‘thing’, بُواْ ⟨buwʾ^{0}⟩ /bó/ [negation marker].

The combination of *sukūn* and *yāʾ* following long *ā* (i.e., *ʾalif* following *fatḥa*) ◌َايْ ⟨-aʾy^{0}⟩ represents the diphthong /ai̯/, e.g. مَايْ ⟨maʾy^{0}⟩ /mâi/ ‘king’. The combination of *sukūn* and *wāw* preceded by *fatḥa* + *ʾalif* ◌َاوْ ⟨-aʾw^{0}⟩ is used for the diphthong /au̯/, e.g. كَاوْ ⟨kaʾw^{0}⟩ /kâu/ ‘mountain, stone’.

3.1. *LG ‘Long Vowel’ Graphemes and the Corresponding Vowels in Kanuri: Tonal Contrasts*

Nearly all open syllable monosyllabic content words in Modern Kanuri—a limited number of nouns and adjectives—bear falling tone.[6] Open syllable monosyllabic function (grammatical) words and verbal nouns may have falling, high, or low tone. In Modern Kanuri, both high tone (HT) and falling

[6] These words have short vowels and so they are light-syllable units which cannot be analyzed as bimoraic. Therefore, the falling tone occurs on light-syllable, or one mora. However, what constitutes the tone-bearing unit (TBU) in Kanuri remains to be established.

tone (FT) consistently correspond to LG 'long vowel' graphemes made up of a vowel grapheme and a corresponding 'weak' letter, as shown in (4).

(4) Open-syllable monosyllabic words: LG graphemic long vowels ~ Modern Kanuri high tone

LG	Modern Kanuri	
سِي ⟨siy⟩ /sî/	/shî/	'foot'
بُو ⟨buw⟩ /bû/	/bû/	'blood'
تِي ⟨tiy⟩ /tí/	/shí/	'he'
تِي ⟨tiy⟩ /tí/	/tə́/	[definite determiner]
دُو ⟨duw⟩ /ndú/	/ndú/	'who?'

Comparison of the LG long vowel graphemes in non-monosyllabic open and closed syllables with the corresponding lexical items in Modern Kanuri (5–6) provides further evidence for tone encoding in Old Kanembu:

(5) Open-syllable non-monosyllabic words: LG graphemic long vowels ~ Modern Kanuri high tone

LG	Modern Kanuri	
فَاتُ ⟨fa'tu⟩ /fáto/	/fáto/	'house'
كِيدَ ⟨kiyda⟩ /kída/	/t͡ʃída/	'work'
كَبُو ⟨kabuw⟩ /kabú/	/kawú/	'day'
كَنُو ⟨kanuw⟩ /kannú/	/kannú/	'fire'
تَالَاكَ ⟨ta'la'ka⟩ /táláka/	/táláa/	'poor man' (< Berber (?) *tələqqé* 'dependent person')

(6) Closed-syllable monosyllabic words: LG graphemic long vowels ~ Modern Kanuri falling tone

LG	Modern Kanuri	
كَام ⟨ka'm⟩ /kâm/	/kâm/	'man'
كَاو ⟨ka'w⟩ /kâu/	/kâw/	'stone'
يِم ⟨yim⟩ /yîm/	/yîm/	'day'
سِيم ⟨siym⟩ /sîm/	/shîm/	'eye'

Examples (5–6) demonstrate a correlation between the LG long vowel graphemes and Modern Kanuri vowels bearing high and falling tone. The short vowel graphemes usually correspond to vowels bearing low tone in Modern Kanuri as shown in (5).

Bearing in mind that most of the LG *sukūn*-marked vowels correspond to schwa in Modern Kanuri, it is more likely that this diacritic represented the phoneme /ə/ in LG.

The following table provides a summary for the possible vowel grapheme/phoneme correspondences:

Table 1: Old Kanembu vowel grapheme/phoneme correspondences

Orthographic representation	Vowel phonemes
◌َ	*a*
◌ِ	*i* (*í*)
◌ٜ	*e*
◌ُ	*o u*
◌ْ	*ə*
◌َا ⟨-a'⟩	*á â*
◌ِي ⟨-iy⟩	*í î*
◌ُو ⟨-uw⟩	*ó ú ô û*
◌ُواْ ⟨-uw'⁰⟩	*ó*
◌ٜيٰ ⟨-ey[a]⟩	*é ê*

4. Consonant Graphemes

The LG writing system did not invent special Arabic script graphemes to represent consonant sounds, but rather adjusted the available graphic inventory for the representation of Old Kanembu. Arabic graphemes were mostly chosen on the basis of a sound resemblance between the consonants in the source Classical Arabic and target Old Kanembu, e.g. ك ⟨k⟩ and ت ⟨t⟩ in LG كْنتَاغ ⟨k⁰nta'g⟩ 'new moon' and Classical Arabic كِتاب ⟨kita'b⟩. Those Old Kanembu consonant sounds which did not exist in Classical Arabic phonology were rendered by:

(i) a Classical Arabic consonant grapheme used for a sound nonexistent in Kanembu, e.g. ث ⟨ṯ⟩ for the Arabic fricative /θ/ is used for the LG affricate /t͡s/; or
(ii) homographically (i.e. under-specification), one letter representing more than one sound, e.g. ج ⟨ǧ⟩ (Classical Arabic = /d͜ʒ/) is used in LG for /d͜z/, /nd͜z/, /d͜ʒ/, and possibly /z/; or
(iii) homophonically (i.e. over-specification), two different letters representing one sound, e.g. LG /p/ conveyed by both ب ⟨b⟩ (Classical Arabic = /b/) or ف ⟨f⟩ (Classical Arabic /f/).

Before presenting a set of consonant grapheme-phoneme correspondences that reflects the current state of understanding of the Old Kanembu phonological system, I will discuss the most analytically difficult and ambiguous cases, i.e. graphemes used for labials, affricates, fricatives and prenasalized stops, with brief justifications for the proposed phonemic features.

4.1. *Labials:* Letters ب ⟨*b*⟩ *and* ف ⟨*f*⟩

The Bornu writing system did not create a specific character for conveying the sound /p/, which in most cases was encoded by the letter ف ⟨f⟩. For example, the verb *hap* 'to lift up' is consistently written as حَفْ ⟨ḥaf⟩. The phonetic value /p/ of the final grapheme ⟨f⟩ in this word has been established on the basis of three arguments. Firstly, the syllable-final /p/ is stable in Kanuri and Kanembu, whereas other labials have undergone various phonological changes (Chonai 1999). Secondly, the verb *hap* with the same meaning 'to lift up' has final /p/ in *Tarjumo* and in all Kanuri and Kanembu dialects, and so the same consonant value is straightforwardly reconstructed for the LG stage. Thirdly, *Tarjumo* has the same word pronounced as /hap/ but written as حَفْ ⟨ḥaf⟩. This is a homographic type of representation, because ف ⟨f⟩ is shared by two consonants /p/ and /f/ (see Table 2 below).

However, the picture is sometimes complicated by free variation of the graphemes ب ⟨b⟩ and ف ⟨f⟩. Consider for example the varying occurrence of ب ⟨b⟩ and ف ⟨f⟩ in coda position in the same word forms, e.g. دَفْتَتَيِ ⟨daf⁰tatay⟩ /dap.tatai/ ~ دَبْتَتَيِ ⟨dab⁰tatay⟩ /dap.tatai/ 'they are kept from'. The verb root *dap* 'to keep from' occurs in Tarjumo and all Kanuri and Kanembu dialects and, as is the case with the final /p/ in the verb *dap* 'to lift up', there is no historical-phonological reason to suggest that the coda consonant in *dap* was anything else than /p/ in LG. The inconsistency in encoding of ⟨dabtatay⟩ /daptatai/ 'they are kept from' is interesting in that the ⟨b⟩ variant for

/p/ was most likely used by one of the scribes in order to compensate for the feature [+plosive], which is absent in the grapheme ⟨f⟩. This kind of positionally unconditioned graphemic variation betrays the scribes' uncertainty in representing sounds not supported by the Arabic graphemic inventory.

Apart from unconditioned graphemic variations, the letter ب ⟨b⟩ is rather consistently applied to /b/ in LG (see Table 2). Thus, all Arabic loanwords with /b/ are invariably written with ⟨b⟩ in LG, e.g. Classical Arabic جَرَّبَ ⟨ğar²aba⟩ → LG جَرَبْثْ ⟨ğarab⁰t⁰⟩ *jarabt* ~ Modern Kanuri *jaraptə́* 'test [verbal noun]'. The use of the voiced grapheme ⟨b⟩ is noteworthy, because final /b/ in Modern Kanuri is devoiced before voiceless stops, i.e. /b/ → [p] / _{/t/, /k/}. In LG, it is not clear whether the same rule operated on final /b/. The consistency in the use of the grapheme ⟨b⟩ in both intervocalic and coda positions does not betray any devoicing rule. In Arabic words, this consistency may be an indication of the scribes' intentions to adhere to 'original' Arabic orthography. However, some native words which have /p/ in coda position in Modern Kanuri are also uniformly represented by ⟨b⟩ in LG, e.g. LG جب ⟨jb-⟩ ~ Modern Kanuri *zəp-* 'to dismount'. It may mean that there were no phonotactic constraints on the final /b/ in LG. However, the question requires further investigation.

4.2. *Affricates and Fricatives: The Letters* ث *⟨ṯ⟩,* س *⟨s⟩,* ج *⟨ğ⟩ and* ز *⟨z⟩*

The letters ث ⟨ṯ⟩ (Classical Arabic = voiceless interdental fricative [θ]) and ج ⟨ğ⟩ (Classical Arabic = voiced postalveolar affricate [d͜ʒ]) are problematic because of their complex correspondences to different sounds in Modern Kanuri. There is also spelling inconsistency between the oldest manuscript, MS 2ShK, and the more recent MS 1YM. A comparative analysis of pairs of ث ⟨ṯ⟩ vs. س ⟨s⟩ and ج ⟨ğ⟩ vs. ز ⟨z⟩ allows us to establish grapheme/phoneme correspondences for MS 1YM and (less confidently) for MS 2ShK.

4.2.1. ث *⟨ṯ⟩ and* س *⟨s⟩ (Based on Bondarev 2005a)*

In MS 1YM, the letter ث ⟨ṯ⟩ is regularly used for the voiceless non-palatal affricate /t͜s/, while the letter س ⟨s⟩ is regularly used for the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/:

MS 1YM: ث ⟨ṯ⟩ = /t͜s/, س ⟨s⟩ = /s/

MS 2ShK does not employ the letter ث ⟨ṯ⟩ at all, and it is not clear whether the letter س ⟨s⟩ was used homographically for conveying both /t͜s/ and /s/, or whether there was only a one-to-one correspondence, i.e. ⟨s⟩ = /s/, which would imply the absence of /t͜s/ in the language of MS 2ShK:

MS 2ShK: س ⟨s⟩ = /s/, or س ⟨s⟩ = /s/ or /ṯs/

4.2.1.1. *Reconstruction of LG /ṯs/ in MS 1YM*

It is known that the letter ث ⟨ṯ⟩ represents an affricate in Kanuri Ajami writing, just as it does in Hausa (Rattray 1913: xix; Yahaya 1988). The earliest external evidence for (Modern) Kanuri is found in a list of Kanuri Ajami letters provided by Duisburg (1913: 9). For the letter ث ⟨ṯ⟩, he gives the pronunciations "[tsh], [tch], and [ts]"[7]—all undoubtedly affricates. *Tarjumo*, a direct successor of Old Kanembu/LG, uses the letter ث ⟨ṯ⟩ for the voiceless palatal affricate [t͜ʃ], e.g. ثِيغِي ⟨ṯiyġiy⟩ [t͜ʃígī́] 'there is'. The same spelling convention is used in Modern Kanuri Ajami (cf. ثِرِنْ ثِرِنْ نِى ⟨ṯirin^{0} ṯirin^{0} ney$_{1}^{a}$⟩ [t͜ʃirint͜ʃirinné] 'blow [your nose]!'; al-Mākab 1997–1998: 6). All these facts point to a distinctive use of ث ⟨ṯ⟩ as a letter representing one or more voiceless affricates in the Ajami tradition of Borno.

In MS 1YM, ث ⟨ṯ⟩ represents one sound only, i.e. ث ⟨ṯ⟩ = [Sound$_{X}$]. This grapheme is used for the coronal consonant in Classical Arabic and there are only two more graphemes used in LG for homorganic coronals, i.e. ت ⟨t⟩ and س ⟨s⟩. These three consonants have a consistent distribution between the sounds they encode.

As to the homorganic ت ⟨t⟩, it is clear from comparison of MS 1YM with both Modern Kanuri and the Kanuri variety of Gazar as documented by Koelle (1854: 73)[8] that ت ⟨t⟩ in LG is only used for what corresponds to /t/ in both Modern Kanuri and Koelle's Gazar (LG ت ⟨t⟩: Gazar Kanuri /t/: Modern Kanuri /t/), and that, internally, no graphemic confusion or alternation between ث ⟨ṯ⟩ and ت ⟨t⟩ has been attested in LG.

As to the grapheme س ⟨s⟩, MS 1YM also clearly distinguishes ث ⟨ṯ⟩ from س ⟨s⟩. The distribution of these graphemes in syllables shows that ث ⟨ṯ⟩ is uniquely restricted to syllable onsets, while there is no such restriction for س ⟨s⟩. This fact indicates that the scribes of MS 1YM did not have difficulty in differentiating between the sounds represented by these two letters (presumably an affricate and fricative). Otherwise, it would be impossible to provide any rational explanation for the unique onset position of ث ⟨ṯ⟩.[9] Therefore, the phonetic interpretation of the three letters would look as follows:

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[7] The spelling in square brackets represents Duisburg's original transliteration, not an IPA representation.

[8] Gazar is a Kanuri dialect of the late 18th century spoken in the area of Birni Gazargamu. Gazar, as spoken by a Kanuri named Ali Aisami, who was in his late sixties at the time, was documented in the 1830s by the German missionary and linguist Sigismund Koelle.

[9] Other evidence for the clear distinction of the letters ⟨ث⟩ ⟨ṯ⟩ and ⟨س⟩ ⟨s⟩ comes from the graphemic alternation between the two in intervocalic position—cf. the examples in (9).

ث ⟨ṯ⟩ = [SOUND$_{X}$], ت ⟨t⟩ = [t], س ⟨s⟩ = [s]

The assumption that ث ⟨ṯ⟩ in MS 1YM represents an affricate of some kind is verified by a comparative analysis of LG (MS 1YM), Koelle's data and Modern Kanuri, in examples (7):

(7) Correspondences for the letters ث ⟨ṯ⟩ and س ⟨s⟩ in MS 1YM, Koelle's Gazar Kanuri and Modern Kanuri (Yerwa):

(a) ث ⟨ṯ⟩ (MS 1YM): /t̠s̠/ (Gazar Kanuri): /s/ (Modern Kanuri)

Orthographic representation in MS 1YM	Koelle's transcription	Realization in Modern Kanuri	
ثُو ⟨ṯuw⟩ /t̠s̠û/	*tsu*	*sû*	'name'
ثْلْم ⟨ṯ^{0}l^{0}m⟩ /t̠s̠ələm/	*tsələm*	*sə́lə́m*	'black'
غُثُو ⟨ġuṯuw⟩ /got̠s̠ó/		*wosó*	'every'
	3rd person subject prefix on class 2 verbs		
ثُتُلُوغ ⟨ṯutuluwġ⟩ /t̠s̠-utulúgə/	*ts-ulugi*	*s-ulúyin*	'he goes out'

(b) س ⟨s⟩ (MS 1YM): /s/ (Gazar Kanuri): /s/ (Modern Kanuri)

Orthographic representation in MS 1YM	Koelle's transcription	Realization in Modern Kanuri	
سَامْغَا ⟨saʾm^{0}ġaʾ⟩ /sámgá/	*samma*	*sámmá*	'all'
مُسْكُ ⟨mus^{0}k$_{1}$o⟩ /musko/	*musko*	*músko*	'hand'
كَسْكَا ⟨k^{0}s^{0}kaʾ⟩ /kəská/	*kəsgā*	*kəská*	'tree'

4.2.1.2. *Palatal /t͜ʃ/ or Non-Palatal /t̠s̠/?*

In (7a–b), Gazar Kanuri (the language variety by some 200 years closer to LG than Modern Kanuri) patterns with LG in affricate-fricative opposition and shows the non-palatal feature of the affricate /t̠s̠/.[10] Using this correspon-

[10] Koelle's data are remarkably consistent in representing voiceless non-palatal affricates in the 3rd person subject prefix, which correlates with the voiceless affricates in LG and voiceless fricatives in Modern Kanuri. The regular correspondence between ث ⟨ṯ⟩ in LG and /ts/ in Gazar Kanuri, as shown in (7a) and (7b), cannot be explained as pure coincidence, and we should regard Koelle's notation as reliable in this particular case.

dence as a first hint, we may assume that ث ⟨ṯ⟩ in LG also represents the voiceless non-palatal affricate /ts̠/.

It is an established fact that palatalization is a relatively recent process in Kanuri (Lukas 1937; Cyffer 1997; Hutchison 1981; Löhr 1997). Koelle's data already show automatic palatalization of the fricative /s/ before the front vowel /i/ (cf. example 8), whereas LG manifests a pre-palatalized stage of the language.

(8) Correspondences for the letters س ⟨s⟩ (LG): /ʃ/ (Gazar Kanuri): /ʃ/ (Modern Kanuri) and ك ⟨k⟩ (LG): /k/ (Gazar Kanuri): /t͜ʃ/ (Modern Kanuri) before *i*

Orthographic representation in LG	Koelle's transcription	Realization in Modern Kanuri	
سِيم ⟨siym⟩ /sím/	*shim*	/ʃìm/	'eye'
كِيدَ ⟨kiyda⟩ /kída/	*kidā*	/t͜ʃída/	'work'

It is very unlikely that LG—a language lacking palatal consonants in all positions—would only demonstrate a palatal feature in the voiceless affricate. Support for the assumption that ث ⟨ṯ⟩ represents the non-palatal affricate is found in LG graphic alternations. As already mentioned, there is a regular alternation ث ⟨ṯ⟩ ~ س ⟨s⟩ intervocalically (see below for phonemic analysis):

(9) Alternation in inter-vocalic position between ث ⟨ṯ⟩ and س ⟨s⟩

ثُندُوغِي ⟨ṯunduwġiy⟩ /ts̠-undúgí/ 'he knows'	→	ثَسُدُوغِي ⟨ṯasuduwġiy⟩ /ts̠a-s-udúgí/ 'they know'
ثُتُلُوغِي ⟨ṯutuluwġiy⟩ /ts̠-utulúgí/ 'he took out'	→	كِسُتُلُوغ ⟨kisutuluwġ⟩ /ki-s-utulúgə/ 'having taken out'
ثِيغِي ⟨ṯiyġiy⟩ /ts̠-ígí/ 'there is'	→	تَسِيغِيَ ⟨tasiyġiya⟩ /ta-s-ígíya/ 'would have been'

As illustrated in (9), in the verbal morphophonemic alternation in intervocalic position, the affricate encoded by the letter ث ⟨ṯ⟩ is realized as a voiceless non-palatal fricative /s/, represented as س ⟨s⟩, and not as a palatal fricative /ʃ/, which would most likely be represented by ش ⟨š⟩. Historically, intervocalic position in Kanuri is 'weak' and liable to change, for instance by palatalization, voicing, lenition, deletion (cf. Cyffer 1997). If the consonant in intervocalic 'weak' position is non-palatal (even before front vowels), the word-initial consonant in 'strong position' should also be

non-palatal. Thus, the affricate encoded by ث ⟨t̠⟩ can only be non-palatal /t͜s/.

Supporting evidence for this hypothesis is found in a spelling error in MS 1YM (Q2: 25). Instead of the regular ⟨t̠⟩ in the existential verbal form ثِيغِي ⟨t̠iyġiy⟩ /t͜sígí/ 'there is', the scribe wrote تْسِيغِي ⟨t⁰siyġiy⟩. Thus, the scribe used two separate letters, ت ⟨t⟩ and س ⟨s⟩, to write the onset in the word-initial syllable. Importantly, the scribe did not employ the letter ش ⟨š⟩ which represents a palatal consonant /ʃ/ in Classical Arabic, to write the digraph, i.e. */t͜s/ = ت ⟨t⟩ + ش ⟨š⟩. Although well-known to the Borno scribes, this letter occurs almost exclusively in Arabic loanwords in LG.

Manuscript MS 2ShK provides further evidence for reconstructing the phonemic value of ث ⟨t̠⟩ as the non-palatal affricate. Thus, the grapheme ث ⟨t̠⟩ in MS 1YM corresponds to a digraph دس ⟨ds⟩ in MS 2ShK, i.e. نِدْسِنِيِبُو ⟨nid⁰siniyibuw⟩ /nidsiniyibó/ (MS 2ShK/Q2: 61) and نَثِيِبُو ⟨neat̠yebuw⟩ /nét͜sijebó/ (MS 1YM/Q2: 61) 'we do not bear/tolerate'. The bigraphemic encoding in this particular place of MS 2ShK may betray the non-palatal affricate feature of the sound represented monographemically in MS 1YM. However, this is a rare example of an affricate representation in MS 2ShK. This manuscript predominantly employs the fricative grapheme س ⟨s⟩, where MS 1YM uses the grapheme ث ⟨t̠⟩. It is still unclear whether س ⟨s⟩ in MS 2ShK is used for the affricate /t͜s/ or for the fricative /s/.

4.2.2. ج *⟨ğ⟩ and* ز *⟨z⟩*

In LG, the grapheme/phoneme correspondences for ⟨z⟩ and particularly for ج ⟨ğ⟩ are more complex and less clear than for ث ⟨t̠⟩. The range of possible correspondences is:

ج ⟨ğ⟩ = /d͜z/, /d͜ʒ/, /z/(?), /nd͜z/, /nd͜ʒ/(?)

ز ⟨z⟩ = /z/, /d͜z/(?)

In traditional Ajami (Duisburg 1913: 9) and modern-day *Tarjumo*, the letters ج ⟨ğ⟩ and ز ⟨z⟩ represent [d͜ʒ] and [z] respectively, as in modern-day *Tarjumo* كَجِغُو ⟨kağiġuw⟩ [kád͜ʒigóː] 'it belongs to' or لُرُزَي ⟨luruzay⟩ [loruzêi] 'they harm'. Hence, a starting point for reconstruction of phonemic values for ج ⟨ğ⟩ and ز ⟨z⟩ in LG would be to assume that ج ⟨ğ⟩ represented a voiced affricate of some kind and ز ⟨z⟩ a voiced fricative.

Both letters are clearly distinct in what they represent in LG. They are not used for the same sound, as illustrated by the fact that ج ⟨ğ⟩ is restricted to syllable onsets while ز ⟨z⟩ occurs in both syllable onset and coda positions,

e.g. زَابُوِيْنِي ⟨za'buwy⁰niy⟩ /zábóiní/ '[those who] they eat', جَزرَاي ⟨ğazra'y⟩ /dz̠az.râi/ 'they believe'. This usage parallels affricate-fricative distribution as attested for the letters ث ⟨t̠⟩ and س ⟨s⟩ (compare section 4.2.1.2. above).

4.2.2.1. *The Reconstruction of* ج ⟨ğ⟩ *as* /dz̠/

As demonstrated for voiceless /ts̠/ and /s/ (see section 4.2.1.2 above), the phonological system of Old Kanembu as represented by LG was most likely at a pre-palatalized stage. Therefore, it would be reasonable to infer that the letter ج ⟨ğ⟩ represented a non-palatal affricate. This assumption is supported by corresponding sets of grammatical and lexical morphemes in LG, Gazar Kanuri, and Modern Kanuri:

(10) Correspondences for the letter ج ⟨ğ⟩ (MS 1YM): /ts̠/ or /dz̠/ (Gazar Kanuri): z (Modern Kanuri)

Orthographic representation in MS 1YM	Koelle's transcription	Realization in Modern Kanuri	
(a) verb roots			
جَك ⟨ğak-⟩ /dz̠ak-/	*tsak-*	*zak-*	'to close; cover'
جْب ⟨ğ⁰b-⟩ /dz̠b-/	*tsəbā- ~ dzəbā-*	*zuwa-*	'to send'
(b) verbal nouns of class 2 verbs			
كْنجَارَم ⟨k⁰nğa'ram⟩ /kndz̠áram/	*kəntsā*	*kənzarám*	'water source'[11]
(c) 3rd person plural subject marker on class 3 verbs			
دْبَجَاي ⟨d⁰bağa'y⟩ /dəba-dz̠-âi/	*debā-ts-ei*	*duwa-z-âi*	'they slaughter'
(d) 2nd person plural object on verbs			
جَاتَّا يه ⟨ğa'ta'yh⟩ /dz̠á-tâi/	*ntsa-rui* 'they see you'	*nzá-tain*	'they seized you'
(e) 3rd person possessive pronoun			
تَتَجِي ⟨tatağiy⟩ /tata-dz̠í/	*tatā-(n)tsə*	*táda-(n)zə́*	'his son'

The correspondences in (10) allow us to identify the phonemic value of ج ⟨ğ⟩ in LG quite confidently. The Gazar Kanuri cognates corresponding to LG ⟨ğ⟩ are represented by either voiceless /ts̠/ or voiced /dz̠/. This is probably related to Koelle's alleged difficulty in distinguishing voiced and

11 Verbal noun of *ya-* 'to drink'.

voiceless affricates.[12] Regardless of whether these variants are genuine Gazar features or Koelle's misinterpretation, it should be noted within the current discussion that both sounds, i.e. /t͡s/ and /d͡z/, are non-palatal. Taking into consideration the phonemic realization of the letter ث ⟨ṯ⟩ as /t͡s/, not /t͡ʃ/ (see 4.2.1.2), there is no reason to assume that the language in its pre-palatal (LG) stage would have [+palatal] phonemes whose reflexes in later (palatal) stages (Gazar Kanuri and Modern Kanuri) would be non-palatal, i.e. /z/.

All cognate items in Modern Kanuri invariably feature the voiced non-palatal fricative /z/[13] as a reflex of ج ⟨ğ⟩ in LG and of /t͡s/ and /d͡z/ in Gazar Kanuri. On this basis, we can safely reconstruct the phonemic value of the letter ج ⟨ğ⟩ as a voiced non-palatal alveolar affricate /d͡z/, for both lexical and grammatical morphemes.

The pronominal morphemes encoded in examples (10c–e) by LG ج ⟨ğ⟩ correspond to Modern Kanuri [z]. In fact, in Modern Kanuri [z] is only one of the surface realizations of the underlying 3rd person morpheme *s*, together with [s], [t͡ʃ], [d͡ʒ], [ʃ], and [t͡s]. Since this underlying *s* is written as س ⟨s⟩ in MS 2ShK in 3rd person verbal subject and object morphemes as well as in 3rd person possessive pronouns, this manuscript provides independent diachronic evidence for the existence of an underlying voiceless alveolar fricative /s/:

(11) Correspondence of ج ⟨ğ⟩ (MS 1YM): س ⟨s⟩ (MS 2ShK)

Representation in MS 1YM	Representation in 2ShK	
غُلْجِي ⟨ġul⁰ğiy⟩ /guld͡zí/	غُلْسِي ⟨ġul⁰siy⟩ /gulsí/	'he said'
دْبَجِي ⟨d⁰bağiy⟩ /dəbad͡zí/	دْبَسِي ⟨d⁰basiy⟩ /dəbasí/	'he slaughtered'
يَغُولُجَادِي ⟨yaġuwluğa'diy⟩ /yagúlo-d͡zádí/	عَغُلُسَدِي ⟨'aġulusadiy⟩ /agulo-sadí/	'their fingers'
جَرْتْوَلْغِنجُورُ ⟨ğar⁰t⁰wal⁰ġinğuw-ru⟩ /d͡zartəwalgind͡zóro/	سِرْتْوَلْكِسُرُ ⟨sir⁰t⁰wal⁰kisu-ru⟩ /sirtəwalkisoro/	'until they make you revoke your faith' (Q. 2/217)[14]

[12] Koelle was allegedly unable to distinguish voiced from voiceless consonants because he was a native speaker of Bavarian German (Barth 1862: xlii, quoted in Löhr 1997: 107–108).

[13] ج ⟨ğ⟩ in جَاتَايه ⟨ğa'ta'yh⟩ 'they seized us' (10d) may have represented a prenasalized /nd͡z/—see the discussion on prenasalized stops below.

[14] This abbreviation refers to the Qur'ān and its chapter (*sūra*) and verse.

Here, MS 2ShK might attest to a pre-affricate stage of the language, i.e. **s* (MS 2ShK) > **dz* (MS 1YM).

4.2.2.2. *Correspondence of* ج ⟨ğ⟩*: /*d͜ʒ*/ (?)*
There are other sets of correspondences between LG (MS 1YM and MS 2ShK), Gazar Kanuri, Modern Kanuri, and Arabic, which point to a putative palatal /d͜ʒ/ rather than a non-palatal /d͜z/ encoded by ج ⟨ğ⟩. The first set of correspondences is illustrated in (12):

(12) Correspondences for borrowed Arabic lexical material: ج ⟨ğ⟩ (Arabic): ج ⟨ğ⟩ (LG): *ts* (Gazar Kanuri): /z/~/d͜ʒ/ (Modern Kanuri)

	Arabic spelling	Representation in LG	Representation in Gazar Kanuri	Modern Kanuri	
a	جَنَّ ⟨ğan^{2}a⟩	جَانَ ⟨ğa’na⟩ /d͜zána/	*tsannā*	*zánna*	‘paradise’
b	جُمَعَ ⟨ğumaʿa⟩	جُمَعَ ⟨ğumaʿa⟩ /d͜zumaʔa/	*tsə́ma*	*zə́ma*	‘Friday’
c	جَوَاب ⟨ğawa’b⟩	جَبْغُ ⟨ğab^{0}ġu⟩ /d͜ʒabgo/	—	*jaáwu*	‘answer’ (‘reply!’ in LG)
d	جَرَّبَ ⟨ğar^{2}aba⟩	جَرَبْتْ ⟨ğarabt^{0}⟩ /d͜ʒarabtə/	—	*jaráwa*	‘test’

In LG, ⟨ğa’na⟩ ‘paradise’ was already an integrated loanword, since it would otherwise have copied the Arabic-orthography spelling without a long vowel, i.e. without ا ⟨’⟩ and with gemination, i.e. with ◌ّ ⟨^{2}⟩. Given the fact that the cognate words in Gazar Kanuri and Modern Kanuri (12a–b) show /t͜s/ and /z/ respectively, i.e. both non-palatal sounds, there is good reason to consider ج ⟨ğ⟩ in LG ⟨*ğa’na*⟩ as representing a non-palatal /d͜z/.

On the other hand, the correspondence of ج ⟨ğ⟩ (LG) to /d͜ʒ/ (Modern Kanuri), as in (12 c–d) most probably indicates that at the time when the manuscripts were written /d͜ʒ/ had already been in use. Otherwise it would be impossible to explain why ج ⟨ğ⟩ corresponds to /z/ in (12a–b) but to /d͜ʒ/ in (12 c–d). Therefore, for ⟨ğab^{0}ġu⟩ and ⟨ğarabt^{0}⟩ the phonemic value of ج ⟨ğ⟩ should be reconstructed as */d͜ʒ/, and for ⟨ğa’na⟩ and ⟨ğumaʿa⟩ as */d͜z/.

The difference in the above correspondences quite possibly provides evidence for the (relative) time of borrowing from Arabic: ⟨*ğa’na*⟩ /d͜zana/ and ⟨*ğumaʿa*⟩ /d͜zuma/ entered the language at the pre-palatal stage when there was no phoneme /d͜ʒ/, whereas ⟨ğarabt^{0}⟩ /d͜ʒarabtə/ ‘test’ and ⟨*ğab*^{0}⟩

/d͜ʒabə/ 'answer' were borrowed after /d͜ʒ/ had been integrated into the consonant inventory.

4.2.2.3. *Regular Use of* ج *⟨ğ⟩ in MS 1YM, MS 2ShK and MS Ar.402 (Bibliothèque Nationale de France) and Irregular Correspondences between* ج *⟨ğ⟩:* ز *⟨z⟩ in MS 1YM and MS 2ShK*

The use of ج ⟨ğ⟩ as a grapheme for the non-palatal affricate /d͜z/ (and also /nd͜z/) is not restricted to one manuscript. There are examples of remarkable consistency across manuscripts where (some) identical glosses in three manuscripts created by different scribes and at different times show the identical usage of ⟨ğ⟩:

(13) Correspondence of ج ⟨ğ⟩ (MS 1YM): ⟨ğ⟩ (MS 2ShK): MS Ar. 402 ⟨ğ⟩: Modern Kanuri /z/, /nz/, /d͜ʒ/

MS 1YM (18th century)	MS 2ShK (16–17th century)	MS Ar. 402 (17th century)	Modern Kanuri	
جُجْرْتْمَ ي ⟨ğuğ^{0}r^{0}t^{0}maye⟩	جُجُرْتْمَيِه ⟨ğuğur^{0}t^{0}mayih⟩	جُجُرْتْمَيِه ⟨ğuğur^{0}t^{0}mayih⟩	*zəzərtə* (?) (root) 'to shake'	'shaker' (Q. 79/7)
جَسْمُكُيِه ⟨ğas^{0}mukuyeh⟩	جَسِمُكُيِه ⟨ğasimukuyih⟩	جَسِمُكُيِ ⟨ğasimukuyi⟩	*nza-* (*nzádəkin* 'I give you')	'I will guide you' (Q. 79/19) (Future /t-/ prefix?)
جْرْفَنْدُ ⟨ğ^{0}r^{0}fandu⟩	جْرْفْنْدُ ⟨ğ^{0}r^{0}f^{0}ndu⟩		**nzərfando* (non-occurring, but cf. *nzəmbaro* 'fatigue')	'meeting' (Q.2/46) (verb noun prefix)
جِيرِ ⟨ğiyre⟩	جِرِ ⟨ğiri⟩		*jíre* /d͜ʒíre/	'truth' (Q.2/26)

However, the use of ج ⟨ğ⟩ and ز ⟨z⟩ in some verb forms looks quite sporadic as seen in (14), particularly in the verbs with initial *y*- in the root (e.g. *yasər* 'to believe' with a past tense prefix *k*-), and the 3rd person subject marker in class 1 and 3 verbs.

(14) Correspondence ج ⟨ǧ⟩ (MS 1YM): ز ⟨z⟩ (MS 2ShK)

MS 1YM	MS 2ShK	
كيجْرَايُكَ ⟨keyǧ⁰ra'yuka⟩ < *k+yasər*	كِزْرَيُكَ ⟨kiz⁰rayuka⟩ < *k+yasər*	'[in what] you believed' (Q. 2/137)

and also:

(15) Correspondence ز ⟨z⟩ /z/ (MS 1YM): ج ⟨ǧ⟩ /d͜z/ (MS 2ShK)

MS 1YM	MS 2ShK	
ثَزْرِيٰ ⟨ṯaz⁰reyᵃy⟩ (Q. 2/28, 121)	سَجْرَاي ⟨saǧ⁰ra'y⟩ (Q. 2/103) سِجْرِيُه ⟨siǧ⁰riyuh⟩ (Q. 2/121)	'they believe'

These irregularities probably reflect the complex verbal morphophonemic alternations typical of LG, Modern Kanuri and other Saharan languages. Notably, the grapheme ز ⟨z⟩ only occasionally occurs in three instances: (i) as the voiced realization of the 3rd person subject marker /s/ in class 1 verbs, e.g. زَابُوي ⟨za'buwy⟩ < *s* + *a* + *buy* 'they eat' (cf. an alternative جَابُوي ⟨ǧa'buwy⟩); (ii) as the voiced realization of the root consonant /s/ in the verb *yasər* 'to believe', e.g., ثَزْرِيٰ ⟨ṯaz⁰reyᵃ⟩ < *tsa* + *yasər* + *ey* 'they believe', (cf. سَجْرَاي ⟨saǧ⁰ra'y⟩); and (iii) in Arabic loanwords containing ⟨z⟩ e.g., رِيٰزْكْجِي ⟨reyᵃz⁰k⁰ǧiy⟩ 'he sent down' < Arabic *razaqa* 'he sent down'. This marginal and irregular use of ز ⟨z⟩ in LG does not allow us to confidently establish its phonemic status and it remains an open question whether ز ⟨z⟩ encodes /z/ or subphonemic [z].

4.3. *Prenasalized Stops* /mb/, /nd/, /nt/, /nd͜z/, /nz/, /ŋk/, /ŋg/, /nd͜ʒ/

There is a strong tendency in LG to encode word-initial (= syllable-initial) stops corresponding to homorganic prenasalized stops in Modern Kanuri (/nd/, /ŋg/, /mb/, and /nd͜ʒ/) only using single graphemes that stand for plosives, i.e. د ⟨d⟩, غ ⟨ǧ⟩, ب ⟨b⟩, and ج ⟨ǧ⟩, respectively.[15] The same tendency

[15] Modern Kanuri and Kanembu do not permit consonant clusters, except for [nasal] + [plosive] combinations. There are both mono- and bisegmental prenasalized stops and affricates. Monosegmental clusters typically occur word-initially, but also in word-internal onset position (lexically restricted to reduplicated pluractional verbs, reduplicated (derived

is observed in syllable onsets. Examples in (16) illustrate correspondences between the word/syllable-initial monographemic letters in LG and prenasalized phonemes in Modern (Yerwa) Kanuri.

(16) Correspondences between ⟨C⟩ (MS 1YM): /NC/ (Yerwa Kanuri) in word/syllable-initial positions

Representation in MS 1YM	Cognate in Yerwa Kanuri	
Word-initially:		
دَرَ ⟨dara⟩ (Q. 2/115)	*ndara*	'where'
غَابُ ⟨ġa'bu⟩	*ŋgáwo*	'back'
غِي ⟨ġiy⟩	*njî* (dialectal (*i*)*nki*)	'water'
تُرِي ⟨turiy⟩ (دُرِي ⟨duriy⟩ in MS 2ShK)	*ndurí*	'twelve'
بْرْسَا ⟨b⁰r⁰sa'⟩ (Q. 2/283)	*mbə́rsá*	'to trust'
جُر ⟨ğur⟩	*njuró*	'elbow'
(Word-initial) Derived forms:		
جَـ ⟨ğa-⟩	*nz*(*a*)-	verbal object marker
جُندُوغُ ⟨ğunduwġu⟩	*nzúndu*	LG: 'knowledge [verbal noun]', Yerwa Kanuri: 'craftiness [noun]'
Word-initial and syllable onset (in reduplicated items):		
غُرُمْغُرُمْ ⟨ġurum⁰ġurum⁰⟩	*ŋgurúm.ŋgurum*	'knee'
غَالْغَالَ ⟨ġa'l⁰ġa'la⟩	*ŋgál.ŋgála*	'bambara groundnut'
Word-internally in syllable onsets:		
اَغْبُل ⟨'aġ⁰bul⟩	*ngə́wúl*	'egg'
كَرَاغْوَ ⟨kara'ġ⁰wa⟩	*ka.rə.ŋgu*	'proximity'
(Word-internal) Derived forms:		
ـجِ ⟨-ği⟩, ـجَ ⟨-ğa⟩	*-nzə́, -nzá*	3rd singular possessive pronouns

There are two possible interpretations of the correspondences in (16): either the LG stops in question were not nasalized, and therefore encoded

and non-derived) nouns, and abstract nouns derived from adjectives/nouns through prefixation).

monographemically, or the consonants represented by these LG graphemes were prenasalized monosegmental (complex) phonemes and as such perceived by the scribes as non-parsable units and therefore encoded by single graphemes.[16] Based on the evidence found in the graphemic variation in representation of the verb (*n*)*dug* 'to know', as shown in (17), I argue for the latter assumption and therefore for the existence of prenasalized stops in LG.

(17) Alternation in representation of onsets of the verb *(*n*)*dog* 'to know':[17] ⟨∅C⟩ ~ ⟨NC⟩

Representation in MS 1YM	Representation in MS 2ShK		Cognate in Modern Kanuri
⟨ØC⟩			
	دُسْكِي ⟨dus^{0}kiy⟩	'I know [1st person singular]'	×
دُوغِيِيُو ⟨duwġiyyuw⟩	دُغُوِي ⟨doġuwiy⟩	'you know [2nd person plural]'	×
يَتَدُيبُو ⟨yataduybuw⟩ /jata.dojbó/	يَتَدُيِبُو ⟨yataduyibuw⟩ /jata.dojibó/	'they did not teach [3rd person plural, causative]'	×
يَسُدُوغُبُغْيِ ⟨yasuduwġubuġ^{0}yi⟩ /yaso.dógobogyi/		'[those who] do not know [3rd person plural]' (*yaso*(?)+V+NEG)	×
ثَسُدُوغِي ⟨ṯasuduwġiy⟩ /ts̠asu.dógí/		'they know [3rd person plural]'	×

[16] The choice of a grapheme representing a voiced plosive consonant, such as د ⟨d⟩, for a sufficient encoding of a complex consonant cluster, such as /nd/, may be explained by the necessary sonority contrast within the syllable. Given that the typical syllable in LG is CV(C), prenasalized stops form syllable onsets and thus contrast the syllable sonority peak, i.e. the vowel. The prototypical feature contrasting with sonority is [-son]. Out of the two elements of the monosegmental cluster /NC/, it is the second one—the stop consonant—which provides the feature most contrastive to the sonority of the syllable peak. Hence, an obvious candidate for the monographemic encoding of the /NC/ cluster is the stop consonant.

[17] Class 1 verb. The cross sign (×) indicates non-existence of word-forms in Modern Kanuri.

Representation in MS 1YM	Representation in MS 2ShK		Cognate in Modern Kanuri
⟨NC⟩			
ثُندُوغ ⟨ṯunduwġi⟩ /ts̠u.ndógi/	سِندُكُو ⟨sindukuw⟩ /si.ndokó/	'he knows [3rd person singular]'	×
ثَندُوغ ⟨ṯanduwġi⟩ /ts̠a.ndógi/	سَندُكِي ⟨sandukiy⟩ /sa.ndokí/	'they know [3rd person plural]'	×
جُندُوغُ ⟨ǧunduwġu⟩ /dz̠u.ndógo/	سَندُكُوُ ⟨sandukuwu⟩ /sa.ndokowo/	'knowledge [verbal noun]'	*nzúndu* 'craftiness'
جُندُوغُمَ ⟨ǧunduwġuma⟩ /dz̠u.ndógoma/		'possessor of knowledge [agent noun]'	*nzundumá* 'clever person'

As shown in (17), the grapheme ⟨n⟩ only appears in two specific morphophonemic environments, i.e., after monosyllabic prefixes in verbal 3rd person forms (ثُ ⟨ṯu-⟩ 3rd person singular marker and ثَ ⟨ṯa-⟩ 3rd person plural marker) and after the monosyllabic prefix جُ ⟨ǧu-⟩ in verbal and deverbal nouns. The onset alternation between ⟨d⟩ and ⟨nd⟩ in spellings of the verbal forms of (*n*)*dog* may point to a morphophonemic alternation, the conditioning of which is not clear at the moment. However, what this alternation clearly demonstrates is that under certain (regular) conditions the verb-initial plosive consonant surfaces as ⟨NC⟩, thus revealing its underlying structure as monosegmental cluster. The alternation can hypothetically be accounted for as follows: word-initial monosegmental complex phoneme /nd/ in (*n*)*dog* was realized phonetically in intervocalic position in morphologically bound forms as an allophonic sequence of [n] and [d], whereby [n] was reassigned to the preceding syllable as coda under a syllabification rule, i.e. [*V.CCV] > [VC.CV].[18]

Variation in the graphemic encoding shown in (17) is not the only support for the assumption that monographemic ⟨C⟩ in LG encodes nasal clusters in items corresponding to /NC/ nasal clusters in Modern Kanuri. Some

[18] This analysis implies that if the initial monographemic consonantal graphemes ⟨C⟩ in the items in (16) appear in the same environment, i.e. after monosyllabic prefixes, they should also be realized graphemically as a sequence of ⟨NC⟩. Evidence for this hypothesis has not yet been found in the manuscripts.

Arabic loanwords with /NC/ sequences at syllable boundaries are also encoded as ⟨C⟩ in LG. For example, the scribes of MS 1YM consistently wrote اَغْرْسَاي ⟨'aġ^{0}r^{0}sa'y⟩ 'they disbelieve', a loan from Arabic *ʾankara* 'to deny', which suggests that the Arabic word was entirely adapted by the scribes of the Old Kanembu glosses and possibly reanalyzed as /ʔa.ŋgər/ with /ŋg/ as a single prenasalized phoneme. The evidence that the orthographic representation اَغْرْسَاي ⟨'aġ^{0}r^{0}sa'y⟩ in MS 1YM must have underspecified the underlying /N/ (irrespective of whether it is an integral part of the /NC/ monosegmental cluster or the first segment in the bisegmental sequence) comes from MS 2ShK—the manuscript older than MS 1YM. MS 2ShK does represent the nasal /n/ of the source language as in اَنكْرْتْبُرُ ⟨'ank^{0}r^{0}t^{0}buru⟩ 'not believing'. Also, the retention of the original nasal in Arabic *ʾankara* 'to deny' which is reanalyzed as prenasalization of the /NC/ cluster is observed in the cognate MK word /ʔa.ŋgər.tə́/ 'denying'.[19]

The modern tradition of glossing in *Tarjumo* may serve as independent corroboration for the graphemic under-specification of nasal clusters in LG: What is pronounced as a prenasalized stop in modern recitation is typically written with a single plosive consonant letter, e.g. phonemic /mb/ in /mbátuwun/ 'swimming' (= MK /mbátə́/ 'swim [verbal noun]') is written as بَاتُوُن ⟨ba'tuwun⟩.[20]

5. Consonantal Grapheme/Phoneme Correspondances and Consonant Inventory in LG

In table 2, grapheme/phoneme correspondences for all consonantal letters attested in LG are presented together with examples for the proposed phonemic interpretation. Table 3 summarizes the postulated consonant inventory of LG.

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19 It is not yet clear if the analysis "Arabic /n/+/k/ > LG /ŋg/" is correct. There is another interpretation which cannot be ruled out at the moment. It is also possible that the vowel /a/ preceding the /ng/ cluster could have undergone nasal assimilation to the following /n/ and was realized allophonically as [ã] with a consequent phonetic loss of /n/: [ʔã.gər]. Compare the spelling of /nandi/ 'you [plural]' in MS 1YM as نَدِ ⟨nadi⟩ (Bondarev 2006a: 134).

20 This is also supported by Ajami data in Benton (1911) where the letters ب ⟨b⟩, غ ⟨ġ⟩, ج ⟨ǧ⟩, and ز ⟨z⟩ are used for both prenasalized and ordinary plosives. Duisburg (1913: 9) also gives two alternative pronunciations for the letter ج ⟨ǧ⟩ as used in Kanuri Ajami: [d͜ʒ] and [nd͜ʒ].

Table 2: Grapheme/phoneme correspondences for consonants in LG

Letter	Transliteration	Sound value[21]	Examples
ب	*b*	/b-/, /-b-/, /-b/ /mb-/, /-mb-/, /-p/, [-p] (?)	بِ ⟨bi⟩ or بٜ ⟨be⟩ /bi/or /*b/e* [genitive], بِيغْ ⟨biyġ^{0}⟩ /bígə/ 'sin' بُواْ ⟨buw'^{0}⟩ /bû/ 'blood' (MS 2ShK) بَمْنُوغُو ⟨bam^{0}nuwġw⟩ /bamnógó/ 'beat!' (MS 1YM) عَبَتْثِي ⟨ʿabat^{0}ṯiy⟩ /ʔabattsí/ 'he/she worships' (MS 1YM) بُويُبُو ⟨buwyubuw⟩ /búiubó/ 'do not eat! [plural]' (MS 1YM) اِدْبْلاغِبُو ⟨'id^{0}b^{0}l'eġibuw⟩ /idəbəlégibó/ (?) 'he does not lead astray' دَبْتَاتَيْبُو ⟨dab^{0}ta'tay^{0}buw⟩ /daptátaibó/ 'they will not be kept from' (MS 1YM); cf. دَفْيِيبُو ⟨daf^{0}yiybuw⟩ /dapjíbó/ 'he does not keep from' (MS 1YM) بْرْسَا ⟨b^{0}r^{0}sa'⟩ /mbərsá/ 'trust' (MS 1YM)
ت	*t*	/t-/, /-t-/, /-t/, /nt-/ (?), /-nt-/ (?)	تَندِي ⟨tandiy⟩ /tandí/ 'they' (all manuscripts) فَاتُ ⟨fa'tu⟩ /fáto/ 'house' (MS 1YM) اِتَا ⟨'ita'⟩ /itá/ [prohibitive] (MS 1YM) غِتْكَغِيِيَاكَ ⟨ġit^{0}kaġiyye'ka⟩ /gitkagíjéka/ 'when we saved' تُرِي ⟨turiy⟩ /nturí/ 'twelve' (MS 1YM) كُتِدُونْ ⟨kuteduwn^{0}⟩ /kuntendón/ 'including you' (MS 1YM)
د	*d*	/d-/, /-d-/, /-nd-/, /nd-/	دِيبَله ⟨diybalh⟩ /díbal/ 'road' (all manuscripts) تَندِي ⟨tandiy⟩ /tandí/ 'they' (all manuscripts) دُوغُو ⟨duwġuw⟩ /dúgó/ 'deed' (MS 1YM) دَاغْنُوغُو ⟨da'ġ^{0}nuwġuw⟩ /dágnógó/ 'fear! [imperative]' نَاسْكُودُو ⟨na's^{0}kuwduw⟩ /náskóndó/ 'your soul' دُو ⟨duw⟩ /ndú/ 'who?'

21 Hyphens indicate the position within a word or syllable.

Letter	Transliteration	Sound value	Examples
ر	*r*	/r-/, /-r-/, /-r/	ءَالَرُ ⟨ʔa'laru⟩ /álaro/ 'to Allah' (MS 1YM) كْرْمَايْرُ ⟨k^{0}r^{0}ma'y^{0}ru⟩ /kərmâiro/ 'to the kingdom' (MS 1YM) تُرِي ⟨turiy⟩ /ndurí/ 'twelve' (MS 1YM)
س	*s*	/s-/, /-s-/, /-s/	سْرَاغْ ⟨s^{0}ra'ġ^{0}⟩ /srágə/ 'he likes [converb]' سِيم ⟨siym⟩ /sîm/ 'eye' سَغَكْ ⟨saġak⟩ /sagakə/ 'to bring down' كَتَسِيغُو ⟨katasiyġuw⟩ /katasígú/ 'belonged to' (MS 1YM) كَنسِمُحَلَن ⟨kansimuḥalan⟩ /kansimohalan/ 'with guidance' مُسْكُ ⟨mus^{0}ku⟩ /musko/ 'hand' (MS 1YM)
غ	*ġ*	/g-/, /-g-/, /-g/(?), /ng-/	غُليا ⟨ġulye'⟩ /gulé/ 'say!' (MS 1YM) دِيغِبُو ⟨diyġibuw⟩ /dígibú/ 'there is not' (MS 1YM) ثْمَاغِي ⟨ṯ^{0}ma'ġiy⟩ /t̠səmágí/ 'he received' (MS 1YM) كْنتَاغْ ⟨k^{0}nta'ġ^{0}⟩ /kəntágə/ 'new moon' (MS1YM) ثُتُلُوغْ ⟨ṯutuluwġ^{0}⟩ /t̠sutulúgə/ 'bringing out [3rd person singular converb]' غَابُ ⟨ġa'bu⟩ /ngábo/ 'back' كْغَيَمْ ⟨k^{0}ġayam^{0}⟩ /kəngajam/ 'messenger'
ف	*f*	/f-/, /-f-/, /-f/, /-p/, [-p] (?), /ɸ/(?), [ɸ](?)	فَاتُ ⟨fa'tu⟩ /fáto/ 'house' (MS 1YM) اَفِي ⟨'afiy⟩ /afí/ 'why?' (MS 1YM) حَفْكِنِيكَ ⟨ḥaf^{0}kiniyika⟩ (?) (MS 2ShK) دَفْيِيبُو ⟨daf^{0}yiybuw⟩ /dapjíbó/ 'he does not keep from' (MS 1YM); cf. دَفْتَاتَا ينُه ⟨daf^{0}ta'ta'ynuh⟩ /daptátâino/ '[when] they will be kept from' (MS 1YM)

Letter	Transliteration	Sound value	Examples
ك	*k*	/k-/, /-k-/, /-k/	كِيدَ ⟨kiyda⟩ /kída/ ‘work’ (MS 1YM) كَاوْ ⟨ka’w^{0}⟩ /kâu/ ‘mountain’ (MS 1YM) وَكَا ⟨waka’⟩ /waká/ ‘never’ (?) (MS 1YM) كْنتَاغْ ⟨k^{0}nta’g^{0}⟩ /kəntágə/ ‘new moon’ (MS 1YM) تَندِيكَ ⟨tandiyka⟩ /tandí-ka/ ‘they + direct object’ بُكْبِ ⟨buk^{0}bi⟩ /bok-bi/ [negative + genitive]
ل	*l*	/l-/, /-l-/, /-l/	لَن ⟨lan⟩ /lan/ ‘on top of’ (all manuscripts) غُلۑا ⟨gulye’⟩ /gulé/ ‘say!’ (MS 1YM) تِلُو ⟨tiluw⟩ /tiló/ ‘one, single’ (MS 1YM) دِيبَله ⟨diybalh⟩ /díbal/ ‘path’ (all manuscripts)
م	*m*	/m-/, /-m-/, /-m/	مَايْ ⟨ma’y^{0}⟩ /mâi/ ‘title of a Kanem/Bornu ruler’ (MS 3ImI) مِنِيۑُو ⟨meniyyuw⟩ /meníyó/ ‘you [plural] turned away’ كُمَ ⟨kuma⟩ /kəma/ ‘lord’ (MS 3ImI) كَام ⟨ka’m⟩ /kâm/ ‘person’ (MS YM)
ن	*n*	/n-/, /-n-/, /-n/	نَدِيلَنْ ⟨nadiylan^{0}⟩ /nadílan/ ‘on you’ (MS 1YM) غُلْكِينِۑا ⟨gul^{0}kiyniyye’⟩ /gulkíníjé/ ‘we said’ (MS 1YM) بُونۑا ⟨buwnye’⟩ /búné/ ‘night’ (MS 1YM) حَنْدِي ⟨ḥan^{0}diy⟩ /ħandí/ ‘we’ (MS 1YM) كْنتَاغْ ⟨k^{0}nta’g^{0}⟩ /kəntágə/ ‘half moon, month’ (MS 1YM)
و	*w*	/w-/, /-w-/	وَل ⟨wal⟩ /wal/ ‘to return’ (MS 1YM) وَكَا ⟨wak’⟩ /waká/ ‘never’ (?) (MS 1YM) كْغْوَارِيغْ ⟨$k^{0}g^{0}$wa’riyg^{0}⟩ /kəngwárígə/ ‘curse’ (MS 1YM) ـوَا ⟨-wa’⟩ /-wá/ [plural marker] (MS 1YM)

Letter	Transliteration	Sound value	Examples
ي	*y*	/j-/, /-j-/	يَاوْ ⟨ya'w^{0}⟩ /jâu/ 'mountains' يِنُوغُو ⟨yenuwġuw⟩ /jenógó/ 'respond! [plural]' (MS 1YM) جَكْسِيَه ⟨ğak^{0}siyah⟩ /d̠zaksija/ 'when he covers' (MS 1YM)
ث	*ṯ*	/t̠s-/, /-t̠s-/	ثُو ⟨ṯuw⟩ /t̠sû/ 'name' (MS 1YM) غُثُو ⟨ġuṯuw⟩ /got̠só/ 'every' (MS 1YM) ثِيغِي ⟨ṯiyġiy⟩ /t̠sígí/ 'there is' (MS 1YM) ثْرْثْرْ ⟨ṯ^{0}r^{0}ṯ^{0}r^{0}⟩ /t̠sərt̠sər/ '(water) source' (MS 1YM) غُلْثَاي ⟨ġul^{0}ṯa'y⟩ /gult̠sâi/ 'they say' (MS 1YM) نِياثِيبُو ⟨nye'ṯiyebuw⟩ /nēt̠sijebó/ 'we do/cannot bear (it)' (MS 1YM) عَبَتْثِي ⟨'abat^{0}ṯiy⟩ /ʔabatt̠sí/ 'he/she worships' (MS 1YM)
ج	*ğ*	/d̠z-/, /-d̠z-/, /z-/ (?), /-z-/ (?), /nd̠z-/, /-nd̠z-/ /d͜ʒ-/ (in loanwords), /-d͜ʒ-/ (in loanwords)	يَغُولُجَادِي ⟨yaġuwluğa'diy⟩ /jangúlond̠zádí/ 'their fingers' جَرَبْجَايْنُوجِي ⟨ğarab^{0}ğa'y^{0}nuwğiy⟩ /d͜ʒarabd̠záinód̠zí/ 'when they ensured themselves, he said' (MS 1YM) (Arabic *ğariba* 'to test') جَبْغُثَ ⟨ğab^{0}ġuṯa⟩ /d͜ʒabgot̠sa 'reply!, they said' (MS 1YM) (Arabic *ğawāb* 'answer') نَاسْكُجَادِيكَ ⟨na's^{0}kuğa'diyka⟩ /náskond̠zádíka/ 'to their souls'
ح	*ḥ*	/ħ-/	حَلَنْه ⟨ḥalan^{0}h⟩ /ħalan/ [adverb/associative morpheme] حُو ⟨ḥuw⟩ /ħú/ 'I' (MS 1YM) حَنْدِي ⟨ḥandiy⟩ /ħandí/ 'we' (MS 1YM, MS 3ImI)
ز	*z*	/z-/, /-z-/, /-z/ (?)	زَابُويْنِي ⟨za'buwy^{0}niy⟩ /zábúiní/ '[those who] eat' (MS 1YM) ثَزْرِي ⟨ṯaz^{0}rey^{a}⟩ /t̠sazréi/ 'they believe' (MS 1YM) يَزْرَيِبُوا ⟨yaz^{0}rayibuw'⟩ /yazrajibú/ 'you do not believe' (MS 3ImI)

Letter	Transliteration	Sound value	Examples
ص[22]	*ṣ*	/s-/, /-s-/ (?)	صِيفَرُنُو ⟨ṣiyfarunuw⟩ /sífaronú/ 'as their appearance' (MS 1YM) كَصَتْكَدْ ⟨kaṣat^{0}kad^0⟩ /kasatkadə/ 'confirmed' (MS 1YM)
ط[23]	*ṭ*	/t-/	طِعْت ⟨ṭiʿ^{0}t⟩ /tiʔtə/ (?) 'door, entrance' (MS 1YM)
ع	ʿ	[ʔ-] (?) (onset glottal stop?)	عَبَتْنُوغُو ⟨ʿabat^{0}nwuġwu⟩ /ʔabatnógó/ 'worship! [plural]' عَبَتْثِي ⟨ʿabat^{0}ṯiy⟩ /ʔabattʃí/ 'he/she worships' < Arabic *ʿabada* 'to worship' The grapheme is most likely used to indicate the Arabic origin of the word.
ه	*h*		كِتَبُه ⟨kitabuh⟩ /kitabu/ 'book' كَسِمُلَنْه ⟨kasimulan^{0}h⟩ /kasimolan/ 'on the path' غُرُبِه ⟨ġurubih⟩ /ngurobi/ 'helpful [lit. 'of help']' This letter is only used in word-final position (strictly speaking, in graphic words). It most probably originates from the Arabic system of using letters as markers of various textual divisions. In Arabic manuscripts, ه ⟨h⟩ was used as graphic terminator to reinforce space between words (Gacek 2007). In *Tarjumo*, this letter also signals the end of the (graphic) word.
ش	*š*	These graphemes are mostly used in Arabic borrowings and may occasionally occur as spelling variants, i.e. ش ⟨sh⟩ ~ ث ⟨ṯ⟩ & س ⟨s⟩; ظ ⟨ẓ⟩ ~ ز ⟨z⟩ & ج ⟨ğ⟩ (?); ق ⟨q⟩ ~ ك ⟨k⟩; ذ ⟨ḏ⟩ ~ ز ⟨z⟩ & ج ⟨ğ⟩ (?).	
ظ	*ẓ*		
ق	*q*		
خ	*ḫ*		
ذ	*ḏ*		

22 Occurs also in borrowings, e.g. اَصِيَامْكَ ⟨ʾaṣiyaʾm^{0}ka⟩ from Arabic *aṣ-ṣiyām* 'fasting'.

23 It occurs more often in borrowings, e.g. طَالُوتْيِه ⟨ṭaʾluwt^{0}yih⟩ (MS 1YM) from Arabic *ṭālūtu* 'Saul'.

Table 3: Reconstructed LG consonants

	bilabial		labio-dental	dental/ alveolar		palatal	velar		pharyngeal	glottal
plosive	p	b		t	d		k	g		ʔ (?)
affricate				t͜s	d͜z					
prenasalised		mb		nd	nd͜z			ng		
fricative	[ɸ]?		f	s	z				ħ	
nasal		m		n						
lateral					l					
rolled				r						
approximant		w				j				

6. Conclusions

6.1. *Old Kanembu Phonology behind the Graphic Curtains*

As shown in the previous two sections, the scribes of the Old Kanembu glosses did not invent new Arabic-script based graphemes to represent native sounds but rather adapted the available graphic inventory of Arabic script. In adapting the inventory, the scribes created a rather elaborate system for encoding vowels and tones, sufficient enough to be recognizable by the readers of their texts more than three hundred years later—a kind of 'shallow orthography' in the sense of Katz & Feldman (1983) and Katz & Frost (1992). The consonant graphemes were however used 'prudently' and received more underspecified readings—a type of 'deep orthography' in the sense of Katz & Feldman (1983) and Katz & Frost (1992). Graphemic underspecification in itself is common in almost any writing system (Daniels & Bright 1996; Coulmas 2003), and whereas it does not constitute a problem for the 'internal' users, it does create an analytical challenge for the 'decipherers' when the language is no longer spoken. How this kind of challenge can be dealt with and what phonological inferences can be drawn from an underspecified writing system such as Old Kanembu Ajami has been demonstrated on a set of the most ambiguous graphemes.

The asymmetry in vowel and consonant representation may well be explained by the function of Old Kanembu as a recitational language used alongside with the recitation of the Qurʾān, as evident in modern-day *Tarjumo* recitation. The vowels are sonority peaks, which gain prominence

within phonological units, and this prominence is ever more salient in recited texts. It was possibly due to this factor that the scribes applied a more specified graphemic encoding to the vowels than to the consonants. Nonetheless, even for the vowels the Borno scribes did not go beyond the Arabic graphemic inventory, not distinguishing for example between /u/ and /o/. This conservative approach may be due to a reverent attitude to the Arabic script as represented in the Qur'ān, and hence reluctance of the scribes to 'distort' the prestigious graphic system. One of the remarkable examples of how the scribes were conscious of the original Arabic graphic words in the Qur'ān is the Old Kanembu word كَصُوم ⟨kaṣuwm⟩ /kasûm/ 'fast' borrowed from Arabic صوم *ṣawm* 'fast'. The once productive nominal prefix *ka-* used in the Old Kanembu lexeme indicates that the word had been intergrated into the Old Kanembu vocabulary by the time the manuscript was written. Although the scribe had a choice between س ⟨s⟩ and ص ⟨ṣ⟩ for writing the sibilant /s/ in /kasûm/, he consistently employed the letter ص ⟨ṣ⟩ used in the original Arabic *ṣawm* for encoding the emphatic /ṣ/.[24]

6.2. *Old Kanembu Influence on Other Varieties of Kanuri in Ajami:* Gargams *and Writing in the Early 19th Century*

As mentioned in section 2.1, some orthographic conventions were consistent even across different manuscripts, suggesting that Old Kanembu represented a kind of quasi-standard, literary form of the language, transcending the dialects. This pan-dialectal nature (although restricted to a certain number of morphemes and words) is also evident in the Ajami texts written in the 19th to early 20th century Kanuri, i.e. the *gargams* and Benton's texts. In fact, Old Kanembu seems to have influenced these texts in many ways including their textual layout and graphic representation.

Thus, the *gargams* are written in a careful, sometimes calligraphic hand comparable to the layout of the Borno Qur'anic manuscripts. On average, the *gargams* do not show many orthographic conventions. For example, the place name Gazargamu—the most famous city in Borno history—is written differently in four *gargams*: غَسَرْكُمُ ⟨ġasar^{0}k^{0}mu⟩ (MS H/279), غَزَرْكُمُ ⟨ġazar^{0}k^{0}mu⟩ (MS H/280), غَزَرْكُمُ ⟨ġazar^{0}kumu⟩ (MS H/281), and قَسَرْغُمُ ⟨qasar^{0}ġ^{0}mu⟩ (MS H/282). At the same time, there are many instances of

24 Cf. a similar example in footnote 22.

universal conventions which may attest to the supra-dialectal nature of this genre. For example, the word كَرْغُو ⟨kar⁰ġuw⟩ /kargó/ 'he lived' is written identically across all *gargams*, schwa /ə/ is expressed universally by *sukūn* ◌ْ ⟨⁰⟩, and final /o/ is almost always conveyed by *ḍamma* + *wāw* ◌ُو ⟨-uw⟩.

The same sporadic conventions are found in Benton's texts: Schwa is expressed by *sukūn*, high tone is indicated in pronouns and some other items, e.g. غَاڢُنْ ⟨ġa'fun⟩ or غَابُنْ ⟨ga'bun⟩ *gābon* /ngáfon/ 'back', أَغُو ⟨'aġuw⟩ /agó/ 'thing' (Benton 1911: I–VIII), ث ⟨ṯ⟩ is used for an affricate (/t͜ʃ/ or /t͜s/), and initial /a/ is conveyed by *hamza* + *fatḥa* ءَ ⟨ʔa-⟩.

These conventions together with the confident calligraphic hands found in some of Benton's texts, betray their authors' affiliation with the *ʿulamāʾ* circles and suggest that they were used to write commentaries in a more codified Old Kanembu. Both Benton's texts and the *gargams* with their spontaneous standardization influenced by Old Kanembu writing probably reflect the beginning of a literary Kanuri, the language that never came into being due to various cultural and political circumstances resulting from (i) the Fulani jihad and the destruction of Gazargamu in 1808; (ii) the dynastic shift at the Borno court in 1834; and (iii) the British and French colonial policy of the early 19th century.

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INFLUENCE OF ARABIC POETRY ON THE COMPOSITION AND DATING OF FULFULDE JIHAD POETRY IN YOLA* (NIGERIA)

Anneke Breedveld**

1. Introduction

One of the significant contexts of use of Arabic script in Africa is the large amount of manuscripts in Fulfulde, inspired especially by Sheehu Usman dan Fodio. The writings of this pivotal political and religious leader and his contemporaries have been revered by his followers, and thus ample numbers have survived until the present day. Being Muslims and inspired by Arabic poetry, Usman dan Fodio's contemporaries have used the Arabic script and metre to write up their compositions in various languages.

The power of the Fulbe states in West Africa was closely associated with the Fulbe's 'ownership' of Islam. Their aversion to the colonial powers who undermined their ruling position has since also led to a massive rejection of Western and Christian education by successive generations of Fulbe (Breedveld 2006; Regis 1997). Most Muslim children do learn to read and write Arabic in the Qur'anic schools, resulting in widespread use of the Arabic script in Fulbe societies until today.

The aim of this paper is to present initial results from the investigation of the jihad poetry composed in Fulfulde which is now available in Yola, Nigeria, and is, for the purpose of this paper dubbed the Yola collection. This collection contains 93 manuscripts of copied Fulfulde poems by Usman dan Fodio and his contemporaries and is at present privately owned by a family (see below). First, the present paper gives a brief introduction to the main poet, Usman dan Fodio, and his contemporaries are named. Next,

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* The initial consonant in the name of the city Yola is a glottal (laryngealized) palatal affricate, represented in standard Fulfulde spelling by *y* with a hook, sometimes also represented as *y* preceded by an apostroph. For reasons of convenience, in this article the English spelling is used.

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some comments are given on the use and status of the Yola collection in present-day Nigeria. The paper further provides an overview of the use of the Arabic script to write Fulfulde and describes the influence of Arabic poetic techniques on the composition and dating of the Fulfulde poems in the Yola collection.

2. Usman dan Fodio

Sheehu Usman dan Fodio (1754–1817) was born in Marata in the state of Gobir (present day Niger) into a Fulbe, Muslim family. Usman dan Fodio is the Hausa form of his name by which he is usually known in the literature. In Fulfulde, he is known as Usumaanu ɓii Foonduye and the form in which his name appears in his Arabic manuscripts is ʿUṯmān ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿUṯmān ibn Ṣāliḥ ibn Muḥammad ibn Hārūn at-Takrūrī al-Mālikī al-ʾAšʿarī, known as Ibn Fūdī (Kensdale 1955: 163). The title *Sheehu* came to be used as his personal name, and in Nigeria he is often merely referred to as *Sheehu*. He became an important Muslim teacher and after he was forced to flee his home town, because of political rivalry with the rulers of Gobir (cf. Njeuma 2012; Boyd & Mack 1997), his main drive became the reclamation of his position, the rooting out of pagan practices, and the installation of 'true' Islam (Haafkens 1979: 25). In those days, the northern part of present day Nigeria and adjacent parts of Niger were an amalgam of smaller states and kingdoms, bound loosely together by vicinity and a kind of common ethnic identification by their leaders as Hausa. Usman dan Fodio became the instigator of a wave of jihads that were directed against these Hausa states, claiming their leaders and population to be pagan or at least only nominally Muslim. The series of battles began in 1804 with an attack on Gobir, the home area of Usman dan Fodio, and formally ended in 1809 with the founding of the Islamic state of Sokoto, i.e. one large Hausa Muslim empire with Sokoto at its centre. The Sokoto empire not only encompassed northern Nigeria, but also large chunks of present day Niger and Cameroon. Although Sokoto previously was a rather unimportant place, it has remained the religious centre of northern Nigeria ever since.

The leaders of the jihad, Usman dan Fodio, his brothers, uncles, and later on also his son Muhammed Bello and daughter Nana Asma'u, were not only warriors with the sword, they were also warriors with words. They were prolific writers, often presenting their ideas in the form of lengthy rhyming texts, hence the remarkable name of such texts: *jihad poetry*. The poems cover a wide range of topics; religion, politics, and history and they provide

an insight into the important Islamic reformist movements at the turn of the 19th century in West Africa, for which Usman dan Fodio has been pivotal.

Although Hausa was the dominant language of the Sokoto empire, many more languages were spoken within its borders. These various groups could be targeted independently by adapting the language of the texts. So the choice of language often gives a clue to the specific audience the message was intended for. Thus, Usman dan Fodio and followers not only composed in Hausa, but also in Arabic, in Usman dan Fodio's own mother tongue, Fulfulde (which had become the language of the empire's elite), and in other local languages like Tamasheq and Kanuri. Of course, they always used Ajami (an orthography based on the Arabic script), adapting it, mostly by the addition of diacritic marks, to suit the peculiarities of the non-Arabic languages. Surprisingly, in the literature we find many references to the Arabic and Hausa poetry of Usman dan Fodio (Adeleye 1971: 361; Haafkens 1979: 40; Hiskett 1973: xxi–xxii), but the poems in his own mother tongue have received less attention. There are only a few publications on Usman dan Fodio's poems in Fulfulde (e.g. Mukoshy 1979). The present paper therefore aims to further the investigation of his poems in Fulfulde.

3. A Two Hundred Year Old Tradition

The Fulbe in Nigeria are rather proud of their famous forefather and his writings have been (and are) diligently collected, read, studied and recited until the present day. The poems are still recited during Islamic religious feasts, especially during *ʿĪd al-Mawlid* (celebration of the birth of Muḥammad) and *Laylat al-Qadr* (celebration of the night of the revelation of the first Sura). This tradition of reciting jihad poetry has been going on since the time of composition. It is therefore likely that the poems were not primarily written to be read in private, but rather that they were composed to be recited, and one purpose of the rhyme and rhythm was their use as a mnemonic device. The poems also had an educational purpose in that through them the audience was taught about Islam.

4. Precolonial Feminism

Because of the separation of the sexes prescribed by Islam, men are not allowed to attend women's gatherings, just as women are mostly excluded from male gatherings. Hence, the audience at any particular jihad poetry recital are either all male or all female. However, there is no clear-cut

division in the creation or the recitation of the poems. Although the majority of the authors and copiers are men, there are also female copiers and writers, notably the daughters of Usman dan Fodio, among whom Nana Asma'u, who lived from 1793 until 1864, is the most famous. Like her father, she was a prolific writer in various languages and genres, including poetry. Her texts were often intended for the education and uplifting of women—thus reflecting her father's idea that women should receive the same formal education as men. Nana Asma'u started teaching women from her own room and out of these classes a regular system grew, whereby women from outlying villages came to Sokoto to receive extended schooling and return home to be teachers themselves (Boyd & Last 1985: 288). This apparent oddity of feminism pre-dating colonial contact resulted in a great deal of attention to the works of Nana Asma'u. Jean Boyd and Beverly Mack have translated, analysed and published many of her works (notably Boyd & Mack 1997). However, in their studies as well, the emphasis was on her texts written in Hausa, so that the jihad poetry composed by Nana Asma'u in Fulfulde remains less well known. Boyd & Mack (1997), for instance, do mention her Fulfulde poems, but they only discuss her poems in Hausa.

5. The Yola Collection

This tradition of reciting religiously inspired poetry in northern Nigeria is supported by the existence of a collection of copies of these poems. In Yola, a family of descendants of Moodibo Raaji (died 1866) consider themselves to be the custodians of a large collection of Fulfulde manuscripts in Arabic script. The present owner of the Yola manuscripts comes from a long line of Islamic teachers. He inherited the greater part of his collection from his mother, Fadimah Moodibo Ahmadu (1925–1979), who in her turn inherited some of the manuscripts from her father, and was given others by her brothers and uncles, returning with new poems from their journeys to different Islamic centres. These manuscripts are sometimes more than a hundred years old and they have been handed down as precious treasures from generation to generation.

The manuscripts are kept in a *ngafakka*—a leather bag used to store holy texts, such as the Qur'ān and other important documents. The Yola collection contains 93 manuscripts of Fulfulde jihad poetry (approximately 1,500 pages) by various authors. The bulk consists of 46 poems by Usman dan Fodio and 26 poems by his daughter Nana Asma'u. Other poems are by Sheehu Abdullaahi (Gwandu) bin Fooduye (Usman dan Fodio's brother),

Muhammed Bello (his son), Moodibo Muhammadu Raaji bin Aali (his contemporary, who moved to Yola), Moodibo Amiinu bin Nakwashiri, Muhammadu Taanu Mo Iilelel, Malam Dembo bii Juuti, Malam Hassan Moodibo Ahmadu, Malam Aminu (Ba) bin Bello Aminu, Hayatu Balda bin Sa'idu Bello (great-grandson), Sa'idu bin Bello Shehu Usmaanu (grandson), Moodibo Iyawa, Malam Muhammadu Ghariibu Sokkoto, Malam Hamaseyo Isa Girei, and Muhammed Bashir Abubakar. The oldest manuscript is probably around 150 years old as it was copied personally by the great-great-grandfather of the present owner, Muhammad Bashir Abubakar. The physical state of these documents varies at present from slightly yellowed paper to pages with torn edges and ink or oil spilled on some of them. Some of the torn documents have been locally sewn together with thread. The manuscripts suffer from the influences of the climate and the hunger of insects and are in need of our attention if we do not want to lose them forever. The present owner of these manuscripts has approached me for assistance in the conservation, transliteration, translation and publication of his collection, which is now partly funded by the Endangered Archives Programme of the British Library (Project no. EAP387).

The social act of oral performances of these poems is even more endangered than the paper manuscripts. At present, there are only few women and even less men left who can recite or sing the poems in the traditional way. Although the current middle-aged have mostly disregarded the performance of the poems, there is some hope of the continuation of the recitals because some much younger people have an interest in the texts and have started to perform. However, there are complaints by the older generation that they do not perform the poems as they should be performed.

6. Influences of Arabic Poetry

Below, some influences of Arabic poetry on Fulfulde poems of Usman dan Fodio and his contemporaries are demonstrated by looking at a few characteristics of one of the poems of the Yola collection. A particular type of poem called *hammisaande*, featuring five lines in one stanza, is borrowed from Arabic poetry, where it is referred to as *taḫmīs* or *muḫammasa*. As can be seen from the examples discussed below, the date of composition is hidden in the penultimate stanza of a poem, using a numerical value for each of the symbols used for the Arabic consonants, yet another feature that can be traced back to Arabic poetic style.

7. Difficulties in Translation

Many problems arise in the transliteration and translation of the manuscripts in this collection. Firstly, poetry is notoriously hard to translate, as it speaks in images and its interpretation depends on feelings and the (literal) meaning is often subordinate to the dictates of rhythm and rhyme.

Secondly, although Fulfulde Ajami is widely used, even today, it lacks an authorized or established standard orthography. Authors adapt the Arabic script, based on their own understanding of the possibilities offered by that script, combined with their understanding of the demands of the language they want to put into writing using the script. Often the context should provide a clue as to the meaning of the words. Moreover, because the usage of *ʾiʿǧām*, i.e. the adding of points above or below letter shapes to form new letters, was probably thought to be less of an infringement of the original script than the invention or adoption of new graphemes, authors often decided to use these to make up new letters. However, dots—as they are by nature not attached to the letter they belong to—have the tendency to float around, and it is often not clear which letter they belong to, hence it is unclear which grapheme is being intended. Also, in rapid writing two or more dots can be blurred into a line and single dots can even easily be confused with random specks of ink or dirt.

Thirdly, over time, a language is prone to change and it is rather unlikely that Fulfulde is an exception. Therefore, these two hundred years old texts present a language that could be outdated, probably containing archaic expressions and old fashioned words and formulations whose meaning might not even be very well understood by present day speakers of Fulfulde. Moreover, words which are still 'alive' may have a different meaning today from that which they had two hundred years ago. Also, in the absence of a large body of well-known texts from that period, the possibilities of comparison and correction are limited.

Given these considerations and limitations, I present here a sample of the first two stanzas (of a total of 23) of the poem *Allah jaafoowo* 'Merciful Allah' in an attempt to transliterate and translate (see Fig. 1).

Allah ngettaymi tagɗoyam hokki neema
'Allah I thank, he created me and gave happiness'
Koo nde ɗuunoymi gedde taccay karaama
'The acts of disobedience that I have multiplied are breaking goodness'
Muyɗo suuroowo jaafotooɗo bo ɗunma
'Who desires the defenders, who is forgiving may last long'
Allah jaafoowo yaafanam gedde jemma

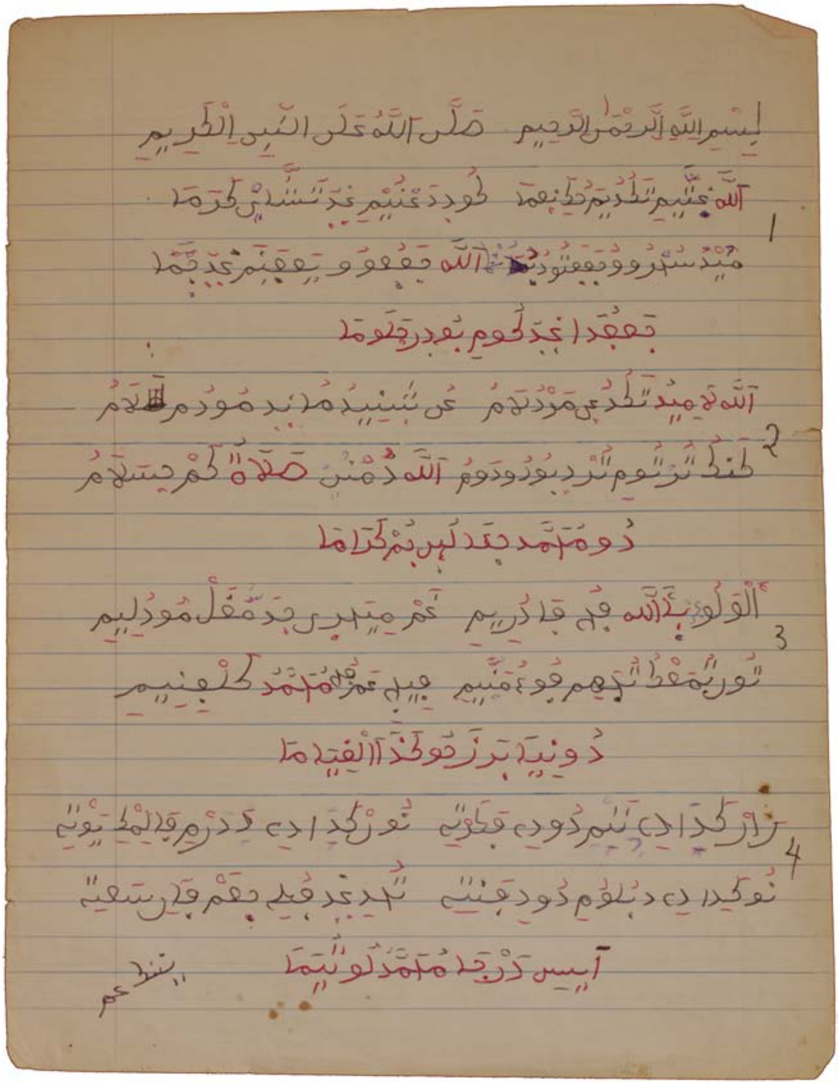


Fig. 1: First page of the copied manuscript of *Alla jaafoowo*

'Merciful Allah, forgive my acts of disobedience at night'
Njafodaa gedde kuumi bo nder nyalawma
'You should also forgive my acts of disobedience in daytime'

Allah laamiido tagdo'en mardo laamu
'Allah, ruler of all creatures, who has the power'
On ceniido mo innde muudum salaamu
'You are the pure one, whose name is liberation'
Kanko torotoomi tornde bo dow dawaamu
'To him I ask a request, also to the eternal one'
Allah dumnoy salaatu kam he salaamu
'May Allah continue to prolong the prayer with liberation'
Dow Muhammad he aalo'en jom karaama
'On behalf of Muhammed and his descendants, the owner of miracle'

8. *Taḫmīs* and *hammisaande*

The first thing to note is that this poem is in all likelihood not by one author. It consists of an original poem which was years later enlarged by a second author. We know this, because a note at the top, probably added by some later copier, reads: *nde Sheehu, hammisaande Bello*, '[poem] by Sheehu [Usman dan Fodio], made five by [Muhammed] Bello [his son]'. This 'making five' refers to a well-known Arabic poetry tradition (p.c. Van Gelder; Kennedy 2000), whereby an already existing poem is enlarged by a second author. This second author adds three hemistichs to one existing line, consisting of two hemistichs, thus making units of five hemistichs.[1] This practice is known in Arabic as *taḫmīs*; the resulting poem is called in Arabic a *muḫammasa*. In Fulfulde, the term *hammisaande* is used for such a poem. All terms are derived from Arabic *ḫamsa* 'five'. *Taḫmīs* is in fact a special kind of amplification of poetry and is usually done as a kind of homage, framing the precious words to make them stand out more (Kennedy 2000: 123–125).

Another clue which indicates that this is indeed an enlarged poem lies in the title. In the Yola collection, the titles of the poems are mostly identical to the first words of the poem, so in this case the poem should have been entitled: *Allah ngettaymi* 'Allah, I thank'. However, as indicated, its title reads instead: *Allah jaafoowo*, which are the first words of the fourth hemistich. This agrees with the application of *hammisaande*, as this technique would prescribe the insertion, in each stanza, of three hemistichs before the first

[1] A hemistich is one half of a line in a poem, one half of a verse.

two of the original poem. The first hemistich of the original thus becomes the fourth of the new poem. Because Muhammed Bello has added three lines before the beginning, the original title line is now the fourth line of the first stanza.

The rhyme scheme can give yet another clue to the application of *hammisaande*. In order to 'make five', Bello cut up each original line of Usman dan Fodio into two hemistichs and added his own three 'halves' to it. So in the original poem all fourth and fifth hemistichs were one line and these original complete lines all ended in *-ma*. The rhyme scheme of the *hammisaande* is therefore now aaaaA, bbbbA, ccccA, ddddA etc., where capital A refers to the original rhyme of Usman dan Fodio and the small letters refer to the added rhyme of Bello—his rhyme agrees with whichever word happened to be in the middle of Usman dan Fodio's verses. It is a mere coincidence that the word *jemma* in the fourth hemistich also ends in *-ma*, rendering the aaaaA scheme for the first stanza. In Fulfulde poetry, rhyming often consists of the repetition of a whole word. In honorific poetry, often the name of the person thus addressed is repeated at the end of each line, which puts more emphasis on the rhythmic quality than on pure sound rhyme.

9. Saintly Qualities

Why Muhammed Bello decided to enlarge his father's poem has not been recorded, but we can assume that it fits in with the general effort made by his contemporaries to compare the life and works of Usman dan Fodio with that of the prophet Muḥammad. For instance, some two years before the beginning of the jihad, Usman fled his home town in Gobir. To confirm Usman dan Fodio's saintly status, this event was later readily described as a hijra. Haafkens (1979: 40) even describes this move as a deliberate attempt on the part of Usman dan Fodio to imitate the prophet. Enlarging the poem as a *hammisaande*, i.e. making the style more Arabic, might also fit in this scheme.

The content of the whole poem is summarized by the original first two lines that were composed by Usman dan Fodio, i.e. "Merciful Allah, forgive me my sins that I committed, both in daytime and during the night". I have been asking Fulfulde speakers what sins Usman dan Fodio might be referring to, but many Fulbe whom I asked were reluctant to answer this question. This possibly also reflects the reverence that people still have for Usman dan Fodio; he is considered a very holy figure and talking about his sins might seem improper. Some preferred a diplomatic answer: "Well, as he was a human being, he must have made the mistakes that all human beings

make". Examples included losing his temper, having sinful thoughts, being hasty in prayer. Hiskett (1973: 110) points out that other texts by Usman dan Fodio betray that he deeply felt the responsibility of shedding Muslim blood. This could also be a form of disobedience against Islamic rules referred to in this poem *Allah jaafoowo*. This point, however, was not suggested by my interviewees, possibly due to the mere fact, that such battles are referred to as jihad, which suggests fighting infidels (*haaɓe*, as they are called in Fulfulde), not fellow Muslims. Some interviewees were more daring. A couple of Mbororo even joked that they considered Usman dan Fodio to be a thief, referring to the cows that (the army of) Usman dan Fodio had confiscated from their forefathers in order to finance his jihad battles. There is some evidence that the present spread of the habitat of the nomadic Mbororo was a direct result of the early 19th century jihad. Muslim troops sweeping into the northern part of Cameroon in search of booty and slaves pushed forward the Mbororo who wanted to secure their herd from marauding soldiers always looking for a quick bite. Some Fulbe still mourn about the cattle their forefathers left behind as food for the army, in the hope that they would not be further harrassed and 'taxed' for more cattle to feed the soldiers.

10. Adapting Arabic Script

Table 1 shows a preliminary list of phonological interpretations of the Fulfulde Arabic script usage in the Yola collection and equivalences in standard modern Roman script-based orthographic representation.

Table 1: Orthographic representation of Fulfulde in Ajami (Arabic-based script) and Roman-based script

Ajami grapheme		Roman grapheme
ا	*alif*	a and lengthening of vowels[2]
ب	*ba*	b, mb, ɓ
ج	*jim*	j, nj, 'y, c
د	*dal*	d, nd, ɗ
ه	*ha*	h

[2] Fulfulde in Ajami makes use of *fatḥa*, *ḍamma* and *kasra* to vocalize the text and represent /a/, /u/ and /i/. In addition sometimes a *hamza*-like grapheme is used to indicate /e/, although often *fatḥa* and *kasra* serve that role (i.e. assuming present-day pronunciation).

Ajami grapheme		Roman grapheme
و	*waw*	w and lengthening of the vowel uu
ي	*ya*	y and lengthening of the vowel ii
ك	*kaf*	k
ل	*lam*	l
م	*mim*	m
ن	*nun*	n
ع	*ʾain*	lengthening of vowels (aa, ee, etc.)
ف	*fa*[3]	f, p
ر	*ra*	r
س	*sin*	s
ت	*ta*	t
غ	*gain*	g, ng

The number of Arabic letters used to write Fulfulde in the poems of the Yola collection is smaller than the number of letters used to write Fulfulde in the modern Roman script. Therefore, compared with modern orthography, some Arabic script letters have multiple interpretations. This might give a clue to the pronunciation of Fulfulde two hundred years ago, but this discussion would go beyond the scope of the present paper.

11. *Tārīḫ* or Chronograms

Tārīḫ is the Arabic term for a chronogram and literally means 'dating'. The Fulfulde term *jummal* for 'chronogram' is probably borrowed from the Arabic *ḥisāb al-ǧummal*. The chronogram is a common tradition in Arabic, Persian and Ottoman-Turkish poetry especially since the 15th century (p.c. Van Gelder). Mostly it is the last stanza of a poem that contains the chronogram to mark an important event, e.g. the year of a death, or the year in which the writing has been finished. The chronogram is usually easily recognised, because it is always announced by the poet, usually by means of a

[3] The dot is sometimes omitted or put under the body of the grapheme.

form of the verb *ʾarraḫa* ‘to date’ in Arabic. In Fulfulde it is preceded by expressions such as “now I will abbreviate the hijra year”. Fulfulde words like *ramzugo* ‘to abbreviate’, *jummal* ‘chronogram’, and *hijra* referring to the date according to the Islamic calendar are used to announce the lines containing the chronogram. Then, the word following the expression announcing the date contains the letters which are to be interpreted numerically. When the values of the consonants in such a word are added together, the total will form the year of composition. The numerical value of letters is based on the *abjad* spelling order of the Arabic script, i.e. *ʾalif-bāʾ-ǧīm-dāl*. This is not the order used in modern Arabic dictionaries, but an older Semitic order of letters, also used for Hebrew and still recognizable in the Latin alphabet (Bauer 2003; Collin 1986: 468; Van Gelder 1998: 172).

The values assigned to Arabic letters by the present custodian of the Yola collection are equivalent to the traditional Semitic system. According to van Gelder (p.c.), however, there exists a different order (as listed in the table below): When Usman dan Fodio and his contemporaries wrote chronograms in Fulfulde though, some Arabic letters vary slightly in value from the values as used in Arabic poetry. Table 2 demonstrates the differences between numerical values of Arabic script letters following the traditional Arabic system and according to traditional Fulfulde usage.

Table 2: Chronogrammatic values of Arabic script graphemes in Arabic and Fulfulde

Grapheme in Arabic poetry	Numerical value	Grapheme in Fulfulde poetry
ا	1	ا
ب	2	ب
ج	3	ج
د	4	د
ھ	5	ھ
و	6	و
ز	7	ز
ح	8	ح
ط	9	ط
ي	10	ي
ك	20	ك

Grapheme in Arabic poetry	Numerical value	Grapheme in Fulfulde poetry
ل	30	ل
م	40	م
ن	50	ن
س	60	ص
ع	70	ع
ف	80	ف
ص	90	ض
ق	100	ق
ر	200	ر
ش	300	س
ت	400	ت
ث	500	ث
خ	600	خ
ذ	700	ذ
ض	800	ظ
ظ	900	غ
غ	1000	ش

Accordingly, there are differences for the following numerical values: 60, 90, 300, 800, 900, 1000. Otherwise, numerical values in Arabic as well as Fulfulde in Arabic script are identical. However, as can be seen from Table 1 above, many Arabic letters are not used for writing Fulfulde, but only for the writing of Arabic words, whether borrowed or loaned. The word used to indicate the date is often an Arabic word, perhaps to enable the use of all numerical values.

The poem *Allah jaafoowo* contains 23 stanzas. The second line of the 21. stanza contains the chronogram of Muhammed Bello, indicating in which year he 'enlarged' the poem of his father.

> *Marɗo hijra* yariishu *ɓeydaa bo limgal*
> 'It is the year of hijra "yariishu" that has to be counted'

The word *yariishu* consists of the consonants ي (10), ر (200), ي (10) and ش (1000) adding up to 1220 AH, approximately 1805 CE.

The last two lines of the 22. stanza contain the (original) chronogram of Usman dan Fodio:

> *Raaru jummal kabiiru limngal mo* shuure
> 'Look at the news of the chronogram, the count of "shuure"'
> *Duuɓi hijra mo maako bo lamnoyaama*
> 'It is there that you can go to ask the years of hijra'

The word *shuure* 'protection' contains the consonants ش (1000), و (6), and ر (200), which add up to 1206 AH, approximately 1791 CE. So, fourteen years later in 1805, Muhammed Bello enlarged a poem that his father composed in 1791.

Obviously, these chronograms are very helpful in dating the composition of the different poems that have been copied over and over again. Remarkably, one chronogram in the Yola collection also helped the present custodian to identify one of the poems attributed to Nana Asma'u as a forgery, since the chronogram indicated a date before Nana Asma'u was even born. However, research into the differences between the Arabic and Fulfulde values of the consonants might possibly lead to a different conclusion.

12. Conclusion

The use of *taḫmīs*, i.e. the Arabic technique of a second author enlarging a poem, which results in a *muḫammasa* 'an enlarged poem of five lines', is integrated as *hammisaande* poems in Fulfulde poetry. Together with the use of chronograms indicating the date of composition, these techniques demonstrate the influence of Arabic poetry on the poems composed by Usman dan Fodio and his contemporaries. The different numerical values of Arabic script graphemes for Arabic and Fulfulde already show that these influences are not copied in their entirety. Further study is needed to explain the differences.

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WEST AFRICAN AJAMI IN THE NEW WORLD (HAUSA, FULFULDE, MANDE LANGUAGES)

Nikolay Dobronravin

Before the writing and orthography reforms of the 20th century, traditional (*maġribī/sūdānī*) Arabic script was the only form of writing known to the majority of West African Muslims. Several elements of the script differed from what was common in the Middle East: there were special marks for the *ʾimāla* (fronting of the Arabic /a/ vowel, so that it is pronounced more like an /e/), *ṣilat al-hāʾ* (when the short vowel of the 3rd person possessive suffix *-hu/-hi* becomes long) and *hamzat al-waṣl*, as well as the so called 'red *ʾalif*' (separate *ʾalif* above the line, in order to mark the length of the vowel), and special punctuation (three-dot sign, etc).

Writing was an element of Islamic knowledge closely connected with some practical skills (Qurʾanic medicine, astrology, business records). Many Islamic scholars would gather a private library, or at least a collection of folios containing poetry, written amulets and prescriptions for their own use (as a kind of 'reference book'), usually in Arabic with explanations or notes in one or more African languages. Often, such notes were, and still are, marked as *ʿağamī* (Ajami).

New letters and vowel-signs for Ajami were being created, at first without any attempts at standardization. Typically, in order to modify an Arabic letter the scribe would add dots (one or three) above or below the character. As concerns the vowel signs, the *ʾimāla* sign to represent the vowel /e/ was widely used by those who wrote in Fula, Hausa, and some Mande languages, such as Susu. A new sign, a *ḍamma* with a dot inside for an /o/, was adapted to the Fula variety of Arabic script in Futa Jalon. Other signs, for instance for labialized and palatalized consonants in Hausa, were also invented. However, very few innovations for Ajami became 'standard' before the massive invasion of Roman script in colonial West Africa.

West African written traditions and Arabic script literacy spread with their bearers into the New World.[1] Some African Muslims retained their

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[1] This paper continues my earlier work published in English and Portuguese, see Dobronravin (2004, 2009). I am grateful to the Trinity College Library, Dublin; Bibliothèque Munic-

literacy skills or learned Arabic script in their new homeland. The use of Arabic script was not uncommon in the Caribbean and the adjacent parts of North America during the time of slavery and after its abolition in the 19th century, especially in Jamaica and Trinidad. It is not clear when and how Arabic-script literacy in the region disappeared. Few documents written in Arabic script in this part of the New World have been studied. Several African Muslims in the Caribbean and North America were able to use Arabic script for writing in an African language. One such example is Mohammedu Sisei from Gambia, who served in the Third West India Regiment between 1811 and 1825, and wrote Mandingo "indifferently in Arabic character" (Campbell 1974: 34).

To my knowledge, only one Ajami/Arabic manuscript from the Caribbean has been studied in detail. This unusual document,[2] a bifolium, was undoubtedly commissioned by a European, as stated briefly on the outside of the manuscript: "Written by Private Philip Finlay—Grenadier Company 3d WI Regiment—(an Arabian Priest) Trinidad. Nov[ember] 21st 1817 for James B [Lenon], Assist[ant] Surgeon, 3rd W[est] I[ndian] Reg[iment]". Thus, the manuscript was written by a soldier from the Third West India Regiment for a military surgeon in Trinidad.

The language and composition of the Dublin manuscript deserve special attention [Fig. 1]. The main language is Hausa in Arabic script, but the text also contains several words and phrases in Arabic, Eastern Fula, Mandinka, and English or English-based Caribbean Creole, all in Arabic script. The author was apparently more at ease with Arabic, rather than English or West African languages. The manuscript includes lists of religious and ethnic groups, among them ⟨ʔaʾraʾbi ʾ baqara ʾal^{0}yaʾhuwda ḥaw^{0}ʾsa^n hulaʾ maʾdiġaʾ⟩ *ʾĀrābī—Baqara—Alyāhūda—Ḥausa—Hulā—Mādigā* 'Arabs, "Buckra" [i.e. "Whites"], Jews, Hausa, Fula, Mandinga', five series of numerals (Hausa, Mandinka, Eastern Fula, English or Creole: ⟨waʾ tuw tiri huw faʾ siqis^0 sabi^n … ʿit^0 nay^{2}iy taʾ⟩ *wā—tū—tiri—hō—fa^n—siqis—ṣabi^n—ʿit—nayyī—ta^n*, and Arabic), a list of holy books and religious communities using them, admonitions, and an authorship note in Hausa. According to this note, the author's origin was ⟨ḥaw^{0}ʾsa^n ġuʾbir^{0}ʾ⟩ *Ḥausa^n Gūbir* (with an apparently redundant final *ʾalif*).

ipale du Havre; Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia, Salvador; and the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro, Rio de Janeiro, for providing microfilms or permission to consult their manuscripts. I owe special gratitude to John Hunwick, Paul Lovejoy, João José Reis and Paulo Farah.

[2] "Arabic MS written by Private Philip Finlay, 1817", TCD MS 2683, Trinity College Library, Dublin.



Figure 1.

It seems that at this time the Ajami rendering of /g/ with *ġayn* was still uncommon, or perhaps the author was not familiar with the widespread Sokoto practice of writing Hausa in Arabic script. In the manuscript [Fig. 2], Allah is referred to as ⟨ʔuʾba^{n} ʾqiḍ̣i⟩ *ʾŪba^{n}qiẓi*, or ⟨ʔuʾbaʾ qiḍ̣iʾ⟩ *ʾŪbāqīẓī* (in modern Roman-script Hausa *Ubangiji*), and *kāf* and *qāf* are used indifferently for Hausa /k/, e.g. ⟨tuw qadubaʾ qay^{2}iy karaʾẗu kasamu ʾal^{0}bar^{0}qaʾ⟩ *tō qa-dubā qay-yī karātu ka-samu albarqā* 'Well, look, read, and may you obtain the blessing' (in modern spelling, *To ka duba ka yi karatu ka samu albarka*).

In Brazil, some specimens of Arabic script were collected by local scholars since the early 19th century. Between 1819 and 1826, José Bonifácio de Andrada e Silva obtained a Hausa *pater noster* in Ajami from a certain "Francisco from Kano" (Drumond 1826). Francis de Castelnau, a famous French traveler and diplomat, found that Africans brought to Bahia were able to read and write in Arabic and "Libyan" (Castelnau 1851: 5). The latter could in principle be any African language, most probably written in Arabic script.

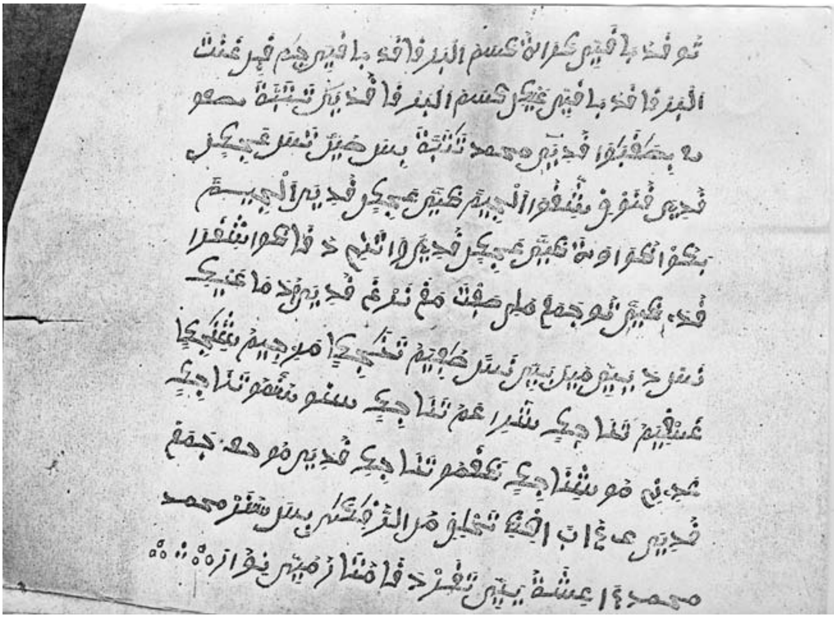


Figure 2.

After the Muslim insurrection of 1835 in Bahia, the criminalization of Arabic script may have contributed to the decline of the Arabic written tradition. In the early 20th century several specimens of Islamic writings from Bahia were collected and published by Raymundo Nina Rodrigues (Rodrigues 1932). The surviving Brazilian manuscripts in Arabic/Ajami, among them three books, have been kept in Salvador, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Le Havre. The scribes sometimes used African languages in Arabic script (mostly Hausa), although Arabic was their main written language.

Up to now, the known examples of Brazilian Ajami include one private letter and a few sentences in Hausa, as well as several phrases and marginal notes in a different West African language that seems to belong to the Mande languages. All the Ajami texts discussed below were first found and described in my publications, if not stated otherwise.

The private letter was written by Abdul Qādiri to Malam Sani, apparently his teacher and maybe a Qādiri sheikh in Bahia. The author informed his correspondent that his wife Rakiyatu gave birth to a daughter named Fatsumata and then asked for condolences or for a charm. The document was confiscated from Francisco Lisboa, a Nupe, in 1844, a few years after the uprising in

Bahia.[3] This is the only known Brazilian document written mainly in Ajami Hausa. Moreover, no other private letters in Arabic script written by African Muslims in Brazil have been found. The suggested reading of the document is as follows:

> ⟨ʿalbar^{0}ka bs^{0}mi ʾll^{2a}hi ʾilr^{2}aḥ^{0}man ʾilr^{2}aḥiymi * ṣal^{2}ay$_{1}$ ʾll^{2a}hu ʿalay$_{1}$ man^{0} laʾ ʾln^{2}abiy$_{1}$^{2}u baʿ^{0}dahu * m^{2}a l^{2}aʾ ṯaʾn^{2}iy$_{1}$ ʾin^{2}iy$_{1}$ ʾal^{0}maʾǧiriy$_{1}$ ʿab^{0}du ʾl^{0}qaʾdiri * ʾin naʿaġġiyšaku * m^{2}a l^{2}aʾ ṯaʾniy$_{1}$ ʾin^{2}iy$_{1}$ ʾal^{0}maʾǧiriy$_{1}$ ʿab^{0}du ʾl^{0}qaʾdiri ʾin narukuw ġaʾfara dumin^{0} ʿala h dumin^{0} ʾan^{2}abi m^{2}uḥamud^{ū} rasuwlu ʾll^{2a}hi ṣal^{2}ay$_{1}$ ʾll^{2a}hu ʿalay^{0}hi salaʾm^{2}a * kaǧiʾ mali ṯaʾniy$_{1}$ mal^{0} matanaʾ rakiy^{2}atu ʾin naʿaġġiyšaku * kaʾǧiʾ mali ṯaʾniy$_{1}$ matanaʾ taḫay^{0}fu suwnaʾ diyaʾ nata faṭ^{2}umaʾta * mali ṯaʾn^{2}iy$_{1}$ ʿašariy$_{1}$ naʾ dum^{2}in^{0} ʿal^{2}a dumin^{0} ʾan^{2}abi yuw tmuwtu s di yyru * ʾin narukuw ʿašariy$_{1}$ naʾ * wʾlḥmd ʾll^{2a}h rb ʾlʿlmyn * ʾin naruw[kuw] ʾl^{2}aham^{2}u barubaru * ʾin naʿaġġiyšaku ʿab^{0}du ʾll^{2a}hi baruby$_{1}$e ru * waman^{0} kataba ʾis^{0}muhu ʿaʾ ʿab^{0}du ʾl^{0}qaʾdir^{2}i tmt yʾ ḥʾ naʾ ʿy^{0}ku dwaniy$_{1}$e ʿabiy$_{1}$ šanaʾ ʿabʾ [*bāʾ* without dot] m^{2}a l^{2}aʾ minaʾ *⟩ *Albarka. Bismillahi ʾl-raḥmani l-raḥim. Ṣalla ʾllahu ʿala man la nabiyya baʿdahu. Malam Sani, inni* [?] *almajiri Abdul* Qādiri, *ina gaishe ku. Malam Sani, inni* [?] *almajiri Abdul Qādiri, ina roqo*[*n*] *gafara domin Allah domin Annabi Muhammadu Rasūlu ʾllāh ṣallā ʾllāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallim. Ka ji, Malam Sani, Mal*[*am*]*, matana Rakiyyatu na gaishe ku. Ka ji, Malam Sani, matanā ta haifu; suna*[*n*] *diyā nata Fatsumata. Malam Sani, a share na* [or: *asirina*] *domin Allah domin Annabi. Yau ta mutu shi diya* [or: *shi dai yaro*]. *Ina roqo a share na* [or *asirina*]. *Wa-ʾl-ḥamdu li-llahi Rabbi ʾl-ʿalamin. Ina ro*[*qo*] *Llahammu. Barubaru na gaishe ku, Abdullahi Baruberu. Wa man kataba ismuhu a Abdul Qādiri. Tammat. Na aiko da wani abi*[*n*]*shana a* [*b*]*a malamina.*[4]

The Hausa/Arabic text is generally understandable, and may be translated into English as follows:

> "Blessing. In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. May God bless [Muḥammad] after whom there is no other prophet. Malam Sani, I am [?] Abdul Qādiri, a student, I am greeting you. Malam Sani, I am [?] Abdul Qādiri, a student, I am asking pardon for God's sake, for the sake of the Prophet Muḥammad, the Messenger of God, may God bless and greet him. Hear, Malam Sani, Malam, my wife Rakiyyatu is greeting you. Hear, Malam Sani, my wife gave birth. Her daughter's name [was] Fatsumata. Malam Sani, I am asking for condolences [or: I am asking for my charm] for God's sake, for the Prophet's sake. She died today, the child [or: the daughter]. I am asking for condolences [or: I am asking for my charm]. And praise be to God, Lord of the worlds. I am praying to God, Barubaru is greeting you, Abdullahi Baruberu [or: I am asking for Abdullahi Baruberu]. I am greeting you, o man [God's slave],

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[3] Francisco Lisbôa, Maço 2850, Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia [hereafter APEB]. My preliminary interpretation of the letter was published with due reference in Reis (2003: 222–224).

[4] Glottalized Hausa consonants are not reconstructed here and below.

> [I am asking for] [Baruberu]. The name of the person who wrote [this letter] is *Abdul Qādiri*. Finished. I sent some drinks to [give] my Malam [i.e., teacher or term of polite address]"

The author of the letter wrote in a western dialect of Hausa. Some grammatical features show that he was not a native speaker. It is not clear whether Franscisco Lisboa himself was the author of the letter. João Reis (2003: 223) suggests that Malam Sani could be identified with Luís Sanim, also a Nupe.

The letter starts with an initial blessing (*albarka*). In modern Hausa, this word would not normally be found at the beginning of a letter. João Reis suggests that it might be a local influence, like Portuguese *benção* 'blessing', used as a greeting. Not excluding the possible influence of Portuguese, I am inclined to think that the new use of *albarka* (or: *alibarika*, *alubarika*) in Bahia was mainly inspired by the Muslim Yoruba tradition of *alubarika* found in invocations (Ryan 1977: 188), which in turn could go back to an obsolete Sudanic and Maghrebi preamble of amulets and talismanic poetry, with or without the traditional *basmala*.

Two more Arabic-script documents (written amulets) from Bahia are undoubtedly bilingual. Unfortunately, the original of one of them is missing, so only the photo published by Rolf Reichert remains available for further study. Reichert tried to interpret this nonvocalized text as Arabic, but could not translate some of the words:

> 'In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. Blessings of Allah be upon [Muḥammad] after whom there is no other prophet. In the name of Allah. Praise be to Allah ... The door ... the door and the key [?] ... The Beneficent [seven times]. If Allah wills, Exalted is He'/ (Reichert 1970, no. 13)

If the document is interpreted as bilingual, the obscure section may be read in Hausa as follows: ⟨mḏ’ dbw mry$_1$ dbw b’b srky$_1$ sy‘l’ b’b wd m‘tǧ [?] sy$_1$ wd nf’d *⟩ *Maza dubu mari dubu. Babu sarki sai Allah. Babu wada* [...] *sai wada na fadi* 'One thousand men, one thousand slaps. There is no god except Allah. There is no way of [...] only as I say'.

It is worth mentioning that in the book published by R. Nina Rodriguez there is a photo of an entrance in Salvador with the Yoruba inscription *KOSI OBÁ KAN AFI OLORUN*. This phrase has the same meaning as *babu sarki sai Allah* in Hausa. The still obscure passage is almost certainly non-Arabic as well. One of the letters has no diacritical dots and may be read differently. The first syllable could be interpreted as Hausa *mu* 'we' with a verb, so the passage would translate as 'there is no way we [...], only [to do] what I said'.

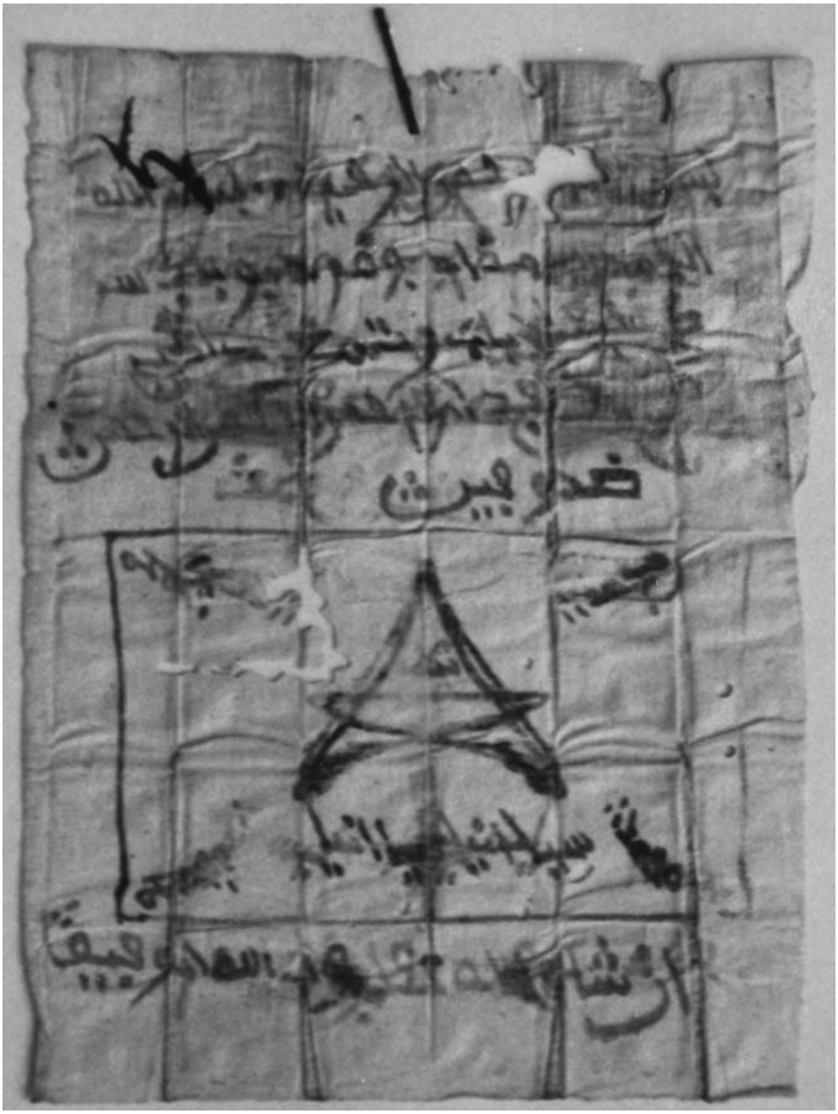


Figure 3.

The second Bahian manuscript with a similar Hausa text was not published by Reichert.[5] In this manuscript, the Hausa section reads as follows: ⟨mḏʾ dbw mry_1 dbw bʾb sr ky_1 syʿlʾ bʾb wtmġn [kʾ kğ] [sy_1 wd] nfd *⟩ *Maza dubu mari dubu. Babu sarki sai Allah. Ba*[*bu*] *wata maga*[*na*] *sai wada* [*?*] *na fadi* [Fig. 3]. The last sentence could mean 'There is nothing to say [or: to do] besides what I said'. Most probably, the Hausa sections of both amulets were identical, but the exact text and meaning of the last sentence remains obscure.

One more missing, but photographed amulet from the Bahia archives included the first sura of the Qurʾān and several frames with one or more words inside. One of the frames contained a Portuguese personal name, Francisco (⟨faran^{0}ṯiyṯiku⟩ *faranthīthiku*), written twice and already found by Reichert (1970, no. 8). Several passages in the Afro-Brazilian amulets are obscure or represent magic *abracadabra*, but no African language except Hausa has been identified.

Among the three Brazilian books written in Arabic script, two belong to the manuscript collection of the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro (Historical and Geographical Institute) in Rio de Janeiro. One of these is a small prayer book from Bahia. This book was found on the neck of an African killed during the uprising on 25 January 1835 and then presented to the collector who donated it to the Institute in 1839.[6] A larger book, described in the collector's note as "a manuscript in strange letters found in a club of the Mina negroes in the capital of Rio Grande do Sul", was confiscated by the police and donated to the Institute in 1855 ("Livro manuscrito c/caracteres arabicos").

The composition of both documents is similar (mostly Qurʾanic quotations and complete suras). The last part of the smaller book (eight pages, numbered from 5 to 12) includes a few verses in Arabic (ending with the name of the Prophet Muḥammad) and several short prayers, among them three phoneticized Arabic, *abracadabra*-like or non-Arabic incantations on pages 7, 11 and 12.

The larger book at the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro contains, besides Qurʾānic texts, two incomplete copies of *al-Burda* by al-Būṣīrī, and a few verses attributed to ʿAlī, both in Malikite West Africa and in the Shiʿite tradition of the Middle East. Two short prayers end with Hausa sentences; the one under (b) is analyzed and translated for the first time in the present paper.

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[5] Maço 2848, Lubê, APEB.

[6] "Livrinho male". For more information on this book, see Reis (2003: 197–205).



Figure 4.

(a) ⟨wana' duwa munarukuw dumiy'ala⟩ *Wanā duwā muna-rokō domī-'Ala*, i.e., *wannan du'a muna roqo domin Allah* '[With] this [invocatory] prayer we are praying for God's sake' [Fig. 4] (f. 82b)



Figure 5.

(b) ⟨wana’ ʔ’duwa diwaka’ ğanaba$^{n’}$ ʔ’buw bakari ṣidiyqu kay^{0}ma’n ġa’fara sulay^{0}ma’na waliğamiyʿu ’l^{0}mus^{0}limiyna wa’l^{0}mus^{0}lima’ti kul^{2}uhumu ʔ’ğ^{0}maʿiyna⟩ *Wanā ʾaduw ā diwakā janaba^{n} Abū Bakari Sidīqu. Kai-māni gāfara Sulaymāna wa-li-jamīʿu-ʾl-muslimīna wa- ʾl-mus*[*li*]*māti kul*[*l*]*uhum ʾajmaʿīna*, i.e. *Wannan addu’a da waka* [or: *duka*] [Arabic]. *Ka-i mani gafara* [Arabic] ‘This is a prayer, all [or: and song] from [?] Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq. Forgive me, Sulaiman [a reference to Sulaymān b. Dā’ūd?], and all the Muslims, men and women, all of them’ [Fig. 5] (Arabic/Hausa, f.83a)

The third Arabic-script book from Brazil is now in the Bibliothèque Municipale du Havre. According to the French note on f.2a, this manuscript was found in the pocket of an African who died during the rebellion of 25 January 1835 in Bahia.[7] Besides Qur'anic quotations, the text includes several short prayers and incantations (f.19a–12b), most of them starting with the already mentioned word *albarika* 'blessing' before the *basmalah*.

Three short texts at the end of the book (f.14b, 13a, 11b) contain obscure passages that may be non-Arabic, although this interpretation is doubtful. Either phoneticized Arabic or an *abracadabra*-like incantation is more plausible.

On f.11a, the invocation ends with the usual *t*[*a*]*m*[*ma*]*t* and a non-Arabic sentence, ⟨'l ṯbmʾ ġfrʾ⟩, probably written in Hausa: *Allah shi ba mu gafara* 'God forgive us'.[8] [Fig. 6] The spelling ⟨'ala⟩ *'alā* for *Allāh*, is not rare in 19th century Hausa manuscripts, especially outside Hausaland.

In 2005, a new Arabic/Ajami collection was found in Brazil, apparently produced by someone born in or connected with Western Sudanic Africa, and now in the private collection of Paulo Farah. In some of the texts, there are marginal and interlinear glosses in an African language, as well as a few phrases apparently written in the same language. Some of the words indicate that the non-Arabic part of the texts may represent a Mande language akin to Soninke (or a dialect of it), e.g., ⟨du⟩ *do* 'and', ⟨tuya'na'⟩ *tuyaanaa* 'knowledgeable' (translation of both Arabic *al-faqīh* and *al-'ārif*), ⟨f'ba⟩ *faaba* 'father'.

All the known Arabic/Ajami manuscripts from the New World demonstrate that the place of Arabic/Ajami written tradition was different from that occupied by Roman-script writing in various European languages. The hierarchy of written languages and "restricted literacy", as described by Jack Goody in his studies of literacy in traditional societies (e.g. 1986), was strikingly similar to the patterns discovered among the Muslims in 20th-century northern Ghana and, with a few exceptions, in northern Nigeria and the Republic of Niger.

Theoretically, Africans in the New World could write any text in Ajami, as they sometimes did when asked by scholars. However, Islamic knowledge as a system was not easily adaptable to "modern (in fact, European/Christian) objectives" and functional literacy.

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7 "Livre trouvé dans la poche d'un noir Africain mort lors de l'insurrection qui éclata dans la nuit du 25 Janvier 1835 à Bahia", MS 556, Bibliothèque Municipale du Havre.

8 With an *'alif* used to mark the vowel-length in the pronoun *mū* 'us'.

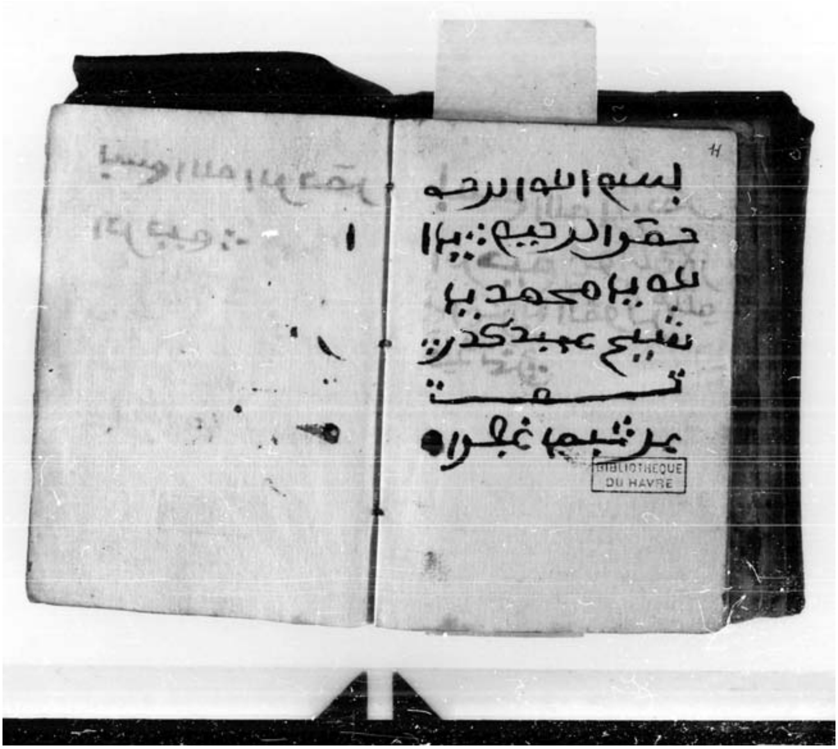


Figure 6.

Even today, neither 'phonemic' Arabic-script alphabets nor 'Ajamization' campaigns (the one in Kano has been organized by my colleague Abdalla Uba Adamu) can easily change the perception of Arabic script in West Africa. This is, to my mind, illustrated by the current use of Arabic/Ajami in most Nigerian publications. During my last visits to Nigeria in 2009/2010, I was able to collect more than eighty such locally-printed books, but only a few of them did not correspond to the traditional roles of Arabic/Ajami mentioned in the beginning of this paper.

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Appendix: Photographs from Reichert

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم ∴ الحـ ـد (١)

لله رب العلمين ∴ الرحمن الرحيم ∴ (٢)

فرنشيثك
فرنشيثك ـلك يوم الدين ∴ اياك نعبد (٣)

واياك نستعين ∴ اهدنا الصر (٤)

اط المستقيم ∴ صراط الذين انعمت (٥)

عليهم غير الـ ـمغضوب (٦)

عليهم ولا الضا لين ∴ امين ∴ (٧)

D. nto N.º 8

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم صلى الله على من (١)

لا نبي بعده . . بسم الله الحمد لله مذ اد بو (٢)

مر دبو باب سرك سيمن باب ود معتج (٣)

سيود نغاد .: الرحمن الرحمن الرحمن الر (٤)

حمن الرحمن الرحمن الرحمن ∴ ان شاء الله (٥)

تعلى ∴

Documento N.º 13

FULA AND THE AJAMI WRITING SYSTEM IN THE HAALPULAAR SOCIETY OF FUUTA TOORO (SENEGAL AND MAURITANIA): A SPECIFIC 'RESTRICTED LITERACY'

Marie-Ève Humery

1. Introduction

On the African continent, as elsewhere, it is difficult to separate the history of the use of Arabic script (for writing either in Arabic or in local languages) from the history of Islam and its dissemination. It could therefore be reasonably assumed that in places where Islam became the dominant or the exclusive religion, a 'writing culture'[1] would have developed concurrently using Arabic script: Ajami.[2]

Fuuta Tooro is one of the places where the religion of the Prophet Muḥammad, Islam, spread. Located in the middle valley of the Senegal River that runs between Senegal and Mauritania, this area came into contact with Almoravid Muslim traders, around the 10th century, and subsequently became one of the main cradles of Sub-Saharan Islam. It was also the scene of an 18th century theocratic revolution, which was followed by the gradual conversion of its entire population (the Haalpulaar'en[3]), and Al Hajj Umar's Jihadist movement across West Africa. However, writing in Arabic script has not only failed to spread widely among the Fuutanke,[4] but the

[1] Used here in the sense of R. Chartier, that is close to *literacy* as social practices involving text(s).

[2] *Ajami* is an Arabic word meaning 'foreign' ("Persian, non-Arabic", according to Phillips 2000: 28, or "foreign writing" for Robinson 2004: 198). It designates non-Arabic languages and may qualify a language or a graphic system. "By extension, the term means literature written in Arabic characters, but in an African language other than Arabic" (Bah & Salvaing 2005: 159). Often used in the African context, the term was also used in the days of al-'Andalus or in Bosnia (Hamès 2002: 183).

[3] The Haalpulaar'en (or *Toucouleurs*) are sedentary agro-pastoralists who inhabit the Sudano-Sahelian region and share Fulani language and culture. The Fulani, traditionally pastoralists, are, along with other social groups, at the origin of the Haalpulaar society and are sometimes regarded as a separate entity, depending on who addresses the question and which 'lens' they use.

[4] It is one of the names of the inhabitants of the Fuuta Tooro. Another one is *Fuutankoɓɓe*.

Pulaar language retains a limited use of Arabic writing, despite some development during the 19th century and efforts by international Islamic organizations in the 20th century.[5] Yet, in a survey of all texts written in Ajami, those in Fulani were the second most numerous after Hausa, and followed by Swahili (Hamès 1999). The Sokoto Caliphate and the theocratic state of Fuuta Jalon have made significant contributions to this Ajami manuscript collection, along with Fuuta Tooro. Nowadays, other Fula-speaking regions have a particular dynamic when it comes to using Ajami. In Fuuta Jalon (Guinea), Jalonke speakers use it to write in Fulfulde (Lüpke 2011).[6] More broadly in Guinea, it is used mostly for informal writing, while the use of Roman script characters has strongly decreased after the failure of Sekou Toure's language policy (Salvaing & Hunwick 2003). Although Guinea seems to be an "exception in the landscape of West Africa" (Lüpke 2004: 101), such variations within the 'Fula archipelago'[7] should be examined.

The narrow use and limited social distribution of Ajami among the Haalpulaar'en brings to mind Goody's definition of 'restricted literacy'[8] (Goody 1968a), i.e., literacy whose characteristics are determined by "factors other than the technique of writing itself" (Goody 1968b: 198). But in the case of the Haalpulaar'en, this literacy in Ajami has existed for so long without spreading that it cannot be considered, as in Goody's theory, to be just one step in an evolutionary process geared towards the expansion of script use in conjunction with that of the social spheres employing the script. Rather, an economy of writing is in question, a 'literacy regime',[9] which assigns each script or literacy a specific place within a larger repertoire of languages and

[5] This case study is limited to Fuuta Tooro, and more specifically to Senegalese villages where I conducted fieldwork for my PhD between 1999 and 2001. It does not pretend to give a general description of Ajami in the whole country of Senegal, let alone in the whole West African region, where many different local literacy situations coexist, of course.

[6] Pulaar is a variant of Fula spoken in northern Senegal and Mauritania. In other African countries where Fula is spoken (estimated at around a dozen), the term *Fulfulde* is used. Including its varieties, Fula is one of the most widely spoken languages in Sub-Saharan Africa (spoken by an estimated 15 to 30 million people, spread out in patches across the Sudano-Sahelien region). It is classified as belonging to the Niger-Congo group, North Atlantic subgroup.

[7] *"L'archipel peul"* [Fula archipelago] is also the title of the volumes 133–135 of the journal *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines*, edited by Botte and Schmitz (1994). The title emphasizes the spatial distribution of the Fulani world, which is configured in islands communicating with each other.

[8] Goody's most recent publication (2000: 4) does not really modify his original conception.

[9] "Literacy is organised in literacy regimes, in structures of distribution, access, value and use that are closely tied to the general make-up of societies" (Blommaert 2008: 6).

writing practices governed by many factors—identity, sociological, economic, religious and political. At the heart of this approach examining why Pulaar Ajami has remained virtually unknown and unused in a society where Islam is prominent, an intriguing phenomenon has taken place in recent decades: the emergence of an orthography based on Roman script and adapted to Fula as a strong component of a movement of cultural nationalism. To contextualize Ajami in Fuuta Tooro thus requires an understanding of the rise of the Pulaar writing system's main contender, the Roman script, locally called *abajada*[10] or 'Bamako alphabet'.

Two surveys I conducted in Senegal provide some statistical and qualitative data mainly based on observation and interviews on the two principal scripts used for transcribing Pulaar, i.e. Roman and Arabic. I conducted the first in 1996 in two villages, Nabadji Civol and Galoya, of the Senegal River Valley as well as in the Guédiawaye suburb of Dakar. The second survey was conducted between 1999 and 2001 in the two Fuutanke villages of Juude and Dungel. There is a general lack of data on the question of writing used for Pulaar in Mauritania. More generally, so-called 'Negro-Mauritanian' written languages, i.e. Pulaar, Soninke, Wolof and Hassaniya, are particularly difficult to investigate within the context of a national power struggle between the original peoples of the Valley and the Beydan,[11] who have held power since independence. The general history and sociology of Fuuta Tooro complement my sources by emphasizing the weight of ideological elements and

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[10] Roman script is often called *abajada* in Senegal. The term is in fact borrowed from an Arabic word, *'abǧad*, which means 'alphabet' in that language. The word, just as 'alphabet', would have been constructed phonetically, corresponding to the first four letters of the alphabet in their original order. In other parts of West Africa, all writing systems are usually referred to as *abajada*, including Arabic script. In Fuuta Tooro, the Fulfulde term *alkule Mbagne* 'Mbagne alphabet' has also been used. This precursory Roman script was defined at a pro-Pulaar convention of activists held in 1962 next to the Mauritanian village of Mbagne, on the Senegalese riverside. Djiby Sall, Amadou Malick Gaye, Murtuɗo Sammba Diop and Yero Dooro Diallo were part of it, and this alphabet has been the framework that inspired the Bamako alphabet (interview with historian Ibrahima Abou Sall, April 2009; personal archive of Djiby Sall: "A mon frère éternel: Amadou Malick Gaye"; email communication, 04.15.2011, with Oumar Bâ, founder of the Washington-based press agency in Fula *Lewlewal Group Networks*). These different Roman script writing traditions (*abajada, alkule Mbagne, alphabet de Bamako*) relate mostly to different initiatives rather than to strong differences in the usage of Roman script writing systems and orthographic choices. Most of the actors involved in Roman script writing systems development were well aware, that choosing to publish in one or the other Fula dialect should standardize their language, and, as for the choice of a specific orthography, they contributed to this process by using mainly the Fuuta Tooro dialect, giving it a dominant position.

[11] Arabs of Mauritania, usually called *Beydan* 'Whites' or Moors.

social power relations which (have) provide(d) the context for Arabic script usage. Technical issues have also affected the development of this script, but rather than acting alone, these boundaries seem to have strengthened strategic positions adopted over time by various players, all acting together to marginalize Fula writings in Arabic script. Grammatological considerations (in the sense of Gelb 1952) remain restricted in my discussions, since, as a social anthropologist, I am aware of the relationship between Pulaar writing in Arabic vs. Roman script which characterizes most literacy practices in use today in Fuuta Tooro, and more broadly in Senegal and Mauritania.

2. An Unknown Alphabet, a Veiled Alphabet

For what and for whom is Pulaar Ajami today? Investigating Ajami is not an easy undertaking in Haalpulaar society. In most cases, the reactions of interviewees in both surveys I conducted in Fuuta Tooro revealed a complete misunderstanding of the term itself. When the term was known (which was rare), or after an explanation to let people understand what *ajami* means, there was often some discomfort on the part of the respondent, or a reluctance to provide an opinion or to express one's wishes for one's own descendants to use this writing system, as if it was the first time that most of the interviewed people were confronted with this issue. Instead, the respondent tried to produce a socially acceptable response, apparently without having thought about this before. The only people aquainted with Ajami as a term and/or as an available writing system for Fula were found among the clerical social group (the *Toorobɓe*), and only a part of the 'marabouts' (i.e. clerics) encountered during my fieldwork was competent in Ajami. This appears to be a particularity of Fuuta Tooro: the Ajami literacy rate seems to be lower in this area than it would be in some other Fulani regions, and even more in Wolof areas, as the Wolof language has played a larger role for the use and spread of Arabic script for the writing of Wolof itself, and probably of surrounding mother tongues. Monteil, in 1964 (1980: 301), referred to this trend for "Toucouleurs du Fleuve" (i.e. Haalpulaar'en from the Senegal River valley) of being literate in Arabic, whereas Wolof were especially able to transcribe their own language with the Arabic script.[12]

Faced with this apparent disinterest in writing Fula in Arabic-based script, it may be surprising that some scholars assert a widespread distri-

[12] "Au Sénégal, les enquêtes pour le Plan de développement, publiées en juillet 1960, montrent que, dans chaque village, il y a au moins quatre ou cinq personnes (jusqu'à

bution of literacy skills in Ajami, stating, for instance, that between 75% (Diagne 1981: 101) and 95% (Cissé 2006: 77) of Senegalese adults can "read and write in Arabic".[13] One need only to consider the low proportion of girls and women enrolled in the country's 'Qur'anic' schools to realize that such figures are deceptive, even when the fieldwork (such as that of Cissé) is situated in high density areas of 'Qur'anic' schooling and literacy rates in Arabic language (Podor, Matam and Diourbel;[14] cf. Lüpke 2004: 99 for Diourbel). These rates are far removed from the results of my field study in two villages of Morphil Island (between Podor and Matam). In the villages of Juude and Dungel where I conducted a survey of 3,701 individuals (both permanent residents and migrants), 14.7% of the population over the age of 15 had scriptural competence in 'Qur'anic Arabic' (13.6% were competent in Pulaar and 33.1% in French).[15] In only one of the two villages,[16] Juude, did I encounter people who could read and write in Pulaar Ajami: 0.9% of Juude residents read and wrote Pulaar only in Ajami; 2.9% were 'bigraphic'.[17] In the two villages combined, 92.7% of respondents self-identified as being able to read and write in Pulaar, but only in Roman script.[18] Another study by the

vingt-cinq, chez les Toucouleurs du Fleuve) capables de lire et d'écrire en arabe, et au moins autant (surtout chez les Wolof) susceptibles de transcrire leur langue en caractères arabes." [In Senegal, the surveys for the Development Plan, published in July 1960, show that in every village, there are at least four or five people (up to twenty-five, among *Toucouleurs* of the River) able to read and write in Arabic, and at least as many (especially among Wolof people) may transcribe their language in Arabic script].

13 Cissé did not specify whether this statistic was obtained from declarative data (interviews) or from tests on writing skills. As for Diagne—no investigation is mentioned and the author simply asserts a percentage.

14 Podor is in the Middle Senegal valley, Matam is on the eastern border of it and Diourbel is in the rural region of the Baol, 150 km east of Dakar.

15 These rates include individuals with literacy skills in at least one, and sometimes two or three languages.

16 In Dungel, with the exception of one *ceerno* (Islamic teacher), I did not record any skills in Ajami.

17 I use this term to connote literacy in two writing systems for the same person. I should clarify that the no-response rate to the question of knowing and using a writing system to write was 6.2% in Juude and 2.6% in Dungel for Pulaar readers.

18 It may be possible that not all the Ajami skills were declared, as my Western identity may have influenced the replies of the villagers, especially with respect to a writing system used for private or secret writings. But this bias should have been limited by my immersion for months in the field and the efforts made by me and my Senegalese collaborators to let people understand our strong interest in all kinds of writings in any language or script. For sure, many manuscripts in Ajami in Fuuta Tooro are still hidden, but literacy skills and grassroots literacy practices (letters, bills, etc.) are accessible to those researchers who stay in the villages and look at the different kinds of writings that are produced and circulate locally.

Association of Senegalese Researchers of 750 rural and urban Pulaar and Wolof speakers showed that "74.7 % use the Latin alphabet to write in the national languages, while 7.7 % use Arabic characters" (Diop et al. 1990: 36–37).[19]

When interviewees in the 1990 survey claimed bigraphic skills, 80 % of them in rural areas and 88 % in urban areas said they prefer the Roman-based script. Of all interviewees, whether Wolof or Pulaar speaking, bigraphic or not, 80.3 % said they preferred the "Latin characters" (Diop et al. 1990: 37). In my own 1999–2001 survey, for the question "What is the most appropriate alphabet to write Pulaar?", 93 % of literate interviewees chose Roman script.[20] Their reasons were largely practical: "fast", "efficient", "easy", and "the best adapted" were some common answers. Other answers linked this alphabet to French (an association stemming from colonization and imposition of a French-language formal education). As for illiterate interviewees, they were more divided between the two writing systems, but those of them who had been encouraged to become literate in Pulaar had exclusively been oriented towards the use of *abajada*, i.e. Roman script.

Thus, the low diffusion and limited enthusiasm for Ajami by the populations surveyed in Fuuta Tooro seems in fact to counter the idea of a "living practice and a so present reality in everyday life" (Cissé 2006: 73).

Another factor leading to the conclusion that the impact of Ajami is marginal is its low representation in published works in Pulaar. In both past and present, the genres and functions of Ajami writings in the River region remain fairly circumscribed. Around 1910, Delafosse (1912: 377) already considered Ajami production to be marginal, concluding that Pulaar did not deserve to be classified "as a written language". In the investigated villages, I encountered neither books, nor manuscripts, nor newspapers written in Ajami, among 49 interviewees interviewed in Dungel and Juude Jaɓe. The few who did use Arabic script in Pulaar, did so to write things that they would only use for themselves. For example, one *ceerno* said he used Arabic writing "only for my own secrets". The function of storing secrets, especially those

[19] This still leaves a relatively high rate of people writing in other writing systems—nearly 18 %—for whom we do not know which writing systems are used. Apart from the adapted Roman script and Ajami, other writing systems have appeared, including four for Fula alone. For more details, see Dalby (1969; 1986: 20), and Diop et al. (1990: 35–36). In recent decades, a number of writing systems have come into use in Senegal, often claiming divine revelation and drawing on Afro-nationalist discourse. The varying impact of these writing systems seems to be very small, usually limited to their 'inventors'.

[20] Note that views on the subject were more mixed for illiterate respondents.

related to religious and esoteric knowledge and practices, has endured as an essential function of Fuutanke Ajami. Hermetism and confidential practices of this alphabet have established it as an instrument of secrets kept for oneself and occasionally a means of communication between select individuals (Delafosse 1912: 379; Gouilly 1952: 220, 266). One person reported using Ajami to read letters. Additional observations and interviews confirmed this use of Ajami in letter writing, even if rare. When writing Ajami takes place outside the religious sphere, it is linked to Haalpulaar culture (for writing local history, or for a repertoire of songs by specific social groups[21]). Poetry in Ajami has also been frequently observed in Fuuta Tooro (as elsewhere), whether written about religious or more worldly topics, the latter being illustrated by the example of a text from Gise, that will be given below.

Conversely, a publishing industry in *abajada*, i.e. Roman script, has fared relatively well in Senegal (Fofana 2003: 62 ff.; Humery 1997), even boasting some bestsellers like the famous *Ndikkiri Jom Moolo* by Yero Dooro Diallo, first published in Cairo in 1981 (Mohamadou 2006) and republished in Dakar in 1988.[22] Many documents written in *abajada* enjoy wide circulation and are easily visible in the villages studied.

To find editorial production in Arabic script, one turns to *wolofal* (Wolof in Arabic script) and to primarily religious subject matters. Wolofal also enjoys popularity and visibility, being exhibited sometimes in rural public spaces, much more in urban ones (collective transports, signs, posters).

3. The Hypothesis of Technical Barriers

The analysis of the difficulties that characterize Pulaar Ajami can be summed up in three points:

i. The lack of formal education for a non-standardized writing code.
   To adopt this form of transcription, a relatively high Islamic education is necessary to master writing Arabic script well enough to produce something written in one's own language with it. The first years of Qur'anic schooling are based on memorization and recitation of the

[21] The *ceerno* in Dungel who uses Ajami also uses it to record magical-religious incantations (*ceefi*) chanted in *pekaan*, the traditional chants of *Subalɓe* fishermen.

[22] According to Fargerberg-Diallo (1995: 67), the first version was published in Cairo in 1978. The 1988 version, published and distributed informally (Fagerberg-Diallo 2002: 3 ff.), is a transliteration from Ajami to *abajada*, i.e. from Arabic to Roman script, and was carried out collectively in 1986.

Holy Book, but not on the writing itself as a skill to practice for its own sake, independently of the copying of Qur'anic verses. At Dungel, the testimony of the only villager practicing Ajami, a *ceerno*, illustrates the autodidacticism in this form of literacy: he described how he learned Ajami by reading a poetic eulogy of the Prophet that his father (also a *ceerno*) had written, and deducing the rules of transcription all by himself. To teach Ajami had never crossed his mind, and when pressed, he said his time was already taken up by his various activities.

ii. Challenges posed by transcription and a lack of norms.
Even when a level is attained allowing access to Ajami, other technical barriers remain; compared to Roman-based script systems, these combine to make this alphabet less attractive in the opinion of a majority of the interviewed villagers. The following five barriers have been identified by researchers, some echoing Delafosse's description (1912: 378–379): "[A] Usually, the scribes do not take specific spelling rules into account, so the same word can be written in many ways, which poses a problem, [B] with *scriptura continua*,[23] of understanding the text. [C] One difficulty with *ajami* manuscripts is deciphering some Arabic letters that have been adapted to sounds of African languages that are not necessarily equivalent to Arabic" (Viola 2004: 89). [D] As mentioned above, "the ambiguity of the identified individual coding practices, which often use a single grapheme to transcribe totally different phonemes" (DAEB-BREDA 1987). [E] Lastly, if the transcription of the vowels is generally adopted, it is not used systematically either, and the diacritics that mark them are not always the same from one scribe to another, just like the non-standardized nature of the entire writing system. Ricard (1995: 13) observes: "In the case of spelling in Arabic script, if the vowels are not marked, the absence of tone makes it very challenging to read a text that is reduced to a skeleton of consonants and is sometimes vocalized by different scribes without pre-established norms. The much more commonly used transcriptions in the Latin alphabet include vowels and restore a more accurate image of the syllable, which partly explains the current success of this alphabet".

[23] I.e. "continuous script". This Latin expression refers to a manner of writing without any spaces and punctuation marks between words and sentences.

iii. Low motivation to use this script.
Because written texts are difficult to access by anyone but the writers themselves, there must exist an element of necessity or desire to push someone to learn a type of writing that cannot be easily or effectively shared or used for interpersonal communication.

Are the technical and practical obstacles sufficient to explain the marginal nature of Pulaar Ajami in Senegal? These challenges have indeed influenced the development of Pulaar Ajami, as confirmed by the responses of our interviewees described above. But the fact that such difficulties have not been transcended, as has been the case for other languages or elsewhere in the Fulani regions, makes it necessary to look for other determinants, more to the tune of ideology, sociology and local history, that have led to the limited use of Ajami, both in terms of the number of readers and writers, and in the variety of uses.

4. Jihad and Ajami: A Continuous Link with Opposing Uses and Purposes

> Il est clair, me semble-t-il. que, comme il est de règle, l'écriture arabe n'a pas été choisie pour ses qualités techniques, pour son adéquation à la langue qu'elle doit exprimer. […] L'écriture arabe a été choisie en raison de son rôle social, comme signe d'appartenance du contenu des écrits à la civilisation musulmane, à la civilisation dont l'Islam, avec son livre sacré arabe et son prophète arabe, est l'idéologie centrale. […] l'écriture est un signe dans un système social, c'est un signe d'appartenance à une civilisation centrée sur une idéologie, c'est-à-dire, à l'époque dont nous parlons, sur une religion donnée.[24] (Rodinson 1963: 268)

This relationship between Ajami and Islam, as analyzed by Rodinson, joins the famous maxim "the alphabet follows religion" (Regensburger & Diringer 1968), but its variable characteristics and sustainability in different Fulani contexts is a test for this claim.

During the 18th century, in order to prepare and strengthen the jihad campaign led by the Caliphate of Sokoto, Fuuta Jalon and Guinea, written Fula

[24] "Clearly, as is usually the case, Arabic writing was not chosen for its technical qualities, because of its suitability for the language it must express. […] The Arabic script was chosen because of its social role as a sign that the contents of the writings belonged to Muslim civilization, a civilization whose central ideology is Islam, with its holy Arabic book and Arabic prophet. […] writing is a sign in a social system, a sign of belonging to a civilization centered on ideology, i.e., at the time we are speaking about, a particular religion".

was used to spread Islam by making it as accessible as possible through a language spoken by everyone (Sow 1966: 15; Robinson 1982: 252). D. Robinson (1988: 62) explains the ideological dimension of Ajami's purveyors in Fuuta Jalon:

> A conscious and educated population, able to develop and express its faith in its own language, was the best guarantor of profits earned by the Islamic revolution and of Fulani solidarity against potential threats.

In both cases (Sokoto and Fuuta Jalon), religion was spread functioning as socio-political cement in the context of opposition against the forces of neighboring groups and French colonialization. Arensdorff's *Manuel de langue peule* written in both Arabic and Roman script attests to the political use of the Arabic script in the Guinean context (1913: 19):

> During this period, many flyers, dropped by the marabouts from the Plateau, were circulated in Foulah [= Fula] with Arabic characters. We always considered it to be impossible to decipher these hieroglyphics. It was useless to have them translated, as our interpreters translated however they wanted, depending on their will.

The Fula language acquired a new status almost similar to that of Arabic (Marty 1921; Brenner & Last 1985). Rather than orally, religious texts were transmitted in written form, translated into local language. This dissemination of Arabic texts translated into Fula using Ajami, along with local texts written directly in Ajami, has assigned to Fula a new high level of symbolic legitimacy. The political goal of community cohesion through the adhesion of its members to a common faith was strengthened by the understanding of these texts, and the Fuuta Jalon Imamate and the Sokoto caliphate sacralized Fula language, rendering it religious (Robinson 1988: 83; Hamès 2002: 177).[25]

In Fuuta Tooro, Ajami developed much later, in the second half of the 19th century,[26] and almost incidentally, as it was used for quite different, and often social, purposes. The establishment of a theocratic regime in 1775 appears to have limited the appeal for Ajami. The political and religious struggle remained mostly internal, between the Fulani dynasty in power

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25 In Sokoto, Hausa also became an Islamic language, following Fula, but this status was mostly recognized outside the Caliphate borders (Brenner & Last 1985: 437).

26 The first text in Ajami currently known in the River Valley was a mystical poem written in the 18th century by Alfa Amar Baa (Botte 1990: 44). It remains difficult, based on the accessible manuscripts, including those of IFAN, as catalogued by Monteil (1965, 1966), to accurately report the extent of texts from the Umarian era.

(the *Denyankoɓɓe*) and the dissidents from varying social backgrounds who joined to form an official group, the *Tooroɓɓe*[27] (sing. *Toorodo*), which now dominated the social pyramid. Islamic adherence and knowledge was a prerequisite to taking part in this new elite. The acquisition of the Arabic language as a signifier and as a means of access to the religion of the reformers was crucial,[28] according to a logic of differentiation vis-à-vis the Fulani dynasty, which the opposition movement aimed to supplant, as this dynasty was already islamicized, but with a low level of competence in speaking and writing the Arabic language and script.

Ajami in Fuuta Tooro was mainly the result of contact with Fulani from other areas. It was introduced to the Valley around 1850–1860 by Al Hajj Umar Taal's fighters from Fuuta Jalon (Robinson 1982: 252 & 255; Kane et al. 1994: 38). It is no accident that the spread of this alphabet coincided with Al Hajj Umar's jihad campaign, similar to what had occurred in Sokoto and Guinea. One major historiographical poem produced during this rise of Ajami provides "an iconoclastic vision of Al-Hajj Umar Taal's holy war" (Kane et al. 1994). The poem was written not by a *Toorodo*, but by a *maabo canyoowo* (a weaver) named Lamin Maabo Gise, who had accompanied Al Hajj Umar during his military-religious conquest and his resistance to French colonization efforts. The objective was clearly to counter the holy war of Taal not through radical critique—it contains an apologia of the *shaykh* Al Hajj Umar—but through a point of view that was still daring enough to attract the area's new readership, which included men less educated than the most literate clerics, who nonetheless had a good mastery of Arabic and a social status (not *Tooroɓɓe*) permitting them to adhere more readily to this more remote reading of the Umarian epic. This text is just one example among many poems written in Pulaar Ajami at the time, including the *qaṣīda*[29] of Tyam (1935), translated and published by Gaden, or the *Mamadu Mamudu*, presented by Robinson (1982), which did not share the political criticism of Al Hajj Umar's jihad. It would thus appear that

27 Several explanations illuminate the etymological meaning of *Tooroɓɓe*, one of which is *toorodɓe* 'praying together'.

28 Subsequently, the acquisition of Islamic knowledge no longer constituted a sufficient condition for 'Toorodization'. Being *Toorodo* gradually became a status transmitted exclusively by blood, with agnatic heredity. However, this has not reduced the elite's interest in ensuring its reproduction and social legitimacy, based on knowledge and religious ethos. Thus, among the Haalpulaar, and in a way that is still quite visible, social hegemony, knowledge of Islam, and Arabic writing competence are inextricably linked, even if recent evolution should be taken into account in this equation.

29 A *qaṣīda* is a panegyric poetic form that comes from the pre-islamic Arabia.

there was a historiographic bustle at that time in which viewpoints were exchanged using Ajami, and those with at least a rudimentary Islamic education were therefore able to understand.

For Al Hajj Umar, the goal was not to popularize this alphabet, in which he had become proficient during a lengthy stay in Sokoto and Fuuta Jalon on his way back from Mecca, but to provide the *sernɓe*[30] of the area with linguistic proficiency. Not only did he use a 'recruitment from above' strategy to gain disciples from among the influential local *sernɓe*, he also brought to him and to Fuuta Tooro prominent clerics, especially those from Fuuta Jalon, in order to increase the proficiency level in Arabic, which was still quite low, even amongst the clerical group of *Tooroɓɓe* (Robinson 1975a:7 & 1975b; Kamara 1998: 17–21; Sall 2000: 376). Inventories of manuscripts from Senegal at the time show a small proportion of Ajami texts, while major texts were written in Arabic.[31] Considered *the* sacred language, in which the Qur'ān had been revealed, Arabic remained a language of prestige, both in terms of religion and of scholarship.

In Fuuta Tooro, Arabic became not only the dominant language of religious affairs, but the only scriptural language that was thought to exist in the common people's minds. At the heart of the Umarian project, which was part of a "rising tradition of *Jihad* and Islamic Statism in West Africa" (Robinson 1988: 131), religious education occupied a decisive place in parallel with the conversion through spouses and access to land, both for property and grazing rights (Sall 2000: 368, 386). This jihad aimed less to impose a Fulani and locally based Islamic culture than to carry out a universalist project of religious expansion through the dissemination of the Tijāniyya (Bah 1992: 55; Botte 1990: 44, note 5), the new Sufi *ṭarīqa*,[32] of which Al Hajj Umar was both *muqaddam*[33] and *ḫalīfa*.[34] His task was to ensure its development (at the expense of the Qādiriyya), and to pave the way for a return to an 'authentic' Islam, opposing deviant trends, either syncretistic (*iḫtilāṭ*[35]) or sectarian,

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30 Pl. of *ceerno*, i.e. Islamic teachers or scholars.

31 For example, Shaykh Musa Kamara wrote the now famous historiography of West Africa in Arabic, which has been partially translated and published in French (Kamara 1998).

32 In the Islamic world, a *ṭarīqa* (literally, 'way' or 'path') is a Sufi order with its own founder and some specificities in theology and in praying practices.

33 I.e. the "leader in a Sufi order who authorizes the recitation of its various prayers" (Brenner 1984: 209).

34 In Arabic *ḫalīfa* means "a specially appointed successor to the *shaykh* of a Sufi order, superior to the *muqaddam*" (Brenner 1984: 208).

35 Sometimes also called *iǧtihād*. *Iḫtilāṭ* means "mixing, mingling; confusion, disturbance" (Hasse), but also "'Interpretation', acceptable to Muslims […]" (Robinson 2004: 212).

which had developed an Islam without Arabic, and thus without access to the original text and language of the *ʾUmma* (Brenner 2008: 50–51). In addition, Al Hajj Umar's three-year stay in Mecca probably contributed to his concept of *jihād* as extending Islam across the largest possible geographical space and introducing a single, transcultural language. Beyond lending his imperialist movement legitimacy and sanctity, the movement's privileged use of Arabic was probably influenced by his stay in Saudi Arabia, where a rising Wahhabist doctrine advocated interpreting Islam exclusively through the Qurʾān and the Sunna, while excluding other written and oral translations or interpretations, including those existing in African languages. Al Hajj Umar's pilgrimage to Mecca also conferred on him, and on Arabic religious knowledge, a privileged and reinforced status and it "allowed him subsequently to play such an important role. […] Having thus become the most learned of all his compatriots he was able on his return to set up a Master and to interpret the Koran in his own way" (Hargreaves 1969: 148–149).

Another Arabizing influence had a strong limiting effect: spatial proximity and longstanding affinities, either spiritual, military, or matrimonial alliances between the Haalpulaar'en and the Beydan. *Zawaya*[36] tribes that specialized in Islamic sciences, particularly the Idaw'ali[37] for the Tijāniyya, regularly trained Fuutanke clerics (Robinson 1975b: 198; Sall 2000: 386, 388; Schmitz 2000). Some social groups, such as the *Modinalla*, developed strong and varied alliances between Moors and Haalpulaar'en (Leservoisier 1994: 211 ff.).

The *Kaɓɓe*[38] (or its equivalent) illustrates by comparison the weakness of Ajami dissemination in Fuuta Tooro: this sort of condensed catechism in Fula corresponding to the Arabic *tawḥīd*[39] has simply not been implemented in the Senegal Valley, even though it was widely known in most other West African Islamic areas. This Fula catechism was used in Guinea for the *firugol*,[40] as well as in Bornu and in Hausa country, and later in

36 *Zawaya* is the plural of *zawiya*: "'Lodge' or headquarters, usually of a Sufi order" (Robinson 2004: 214).

37 Moorish clerical tribe from the Trarza, Tagant and Adrar regions (Mauritania), linked to the Tijāniyya order.

38 Tenet of faith or dogma; teaching of the Arabic *tawḥīd* in Fulfulde language (Brenner 1984: 209).

39 I.e. "muslim doctrine of the unity of God; dogmatic theology" (Brenner 1984: 210).

40 This term means 'translation' or 'commentary' in Fula. It is a section in the Islamic curriculum consisting in teaching in the Fula language. In Fuuta Jalon, it took place after the Qur'anic recitation and before or concurrently with higher studies in Arabic (Brenner 1984: 85).

the framework of Hamalism in Jelgooji (now Burkina Faso), and in Mali[41] (Botte 1990; Diallo 2009; Brenner 1984 & 1985; Brenner & Last 1985), all areas that were in contact with the Senegal Valley. Except for the case of Guinea, where it was "far from being a counter-culture" (Botte 1990: 45), this Islamic Fula literature and these oral teachings were deployed in the spirit of transmitting Islamic knowledge to sections of the population typically excluded from advanced study, women and slaves. In Sokoto, Uthman dan Fodio's daughter Nana Asma'u (1793–1864) undertook an extensive teaching campaign with these social groups in Fula and Hausa languages.[42] Dan Fodio, who had founded the theocracy, paved the way by writing in Arabic, Hausa and Fulani, all the while fighting the *Kaɓɓe* proponents who were judged as being too sectarian, because they were cut off from Arab Islam on account of their choosing to use theological commentaries in Fula (Brenner 2008: 52).

The relationship between local languages used as religious languages and for the purpose of democratizing religious knowledge played out in reverse in Fuuta Toro, before and after the spread of the Tijāniyya.[43] Indeed, Ajami did not carry the same movement there from top to bottom of the social pyramid. Its use not only came about relatively late, but was limited to a "small elite" (Fagerberg-Diallo 2001: 156), consisting mainly of *Tooroɓɓe* clerics, who sought to strengthen their "knowledge-power" (Schmitz 1985: 555) and to keep it within their own group. Wane (1969: 76–77, note 42) refers to this "elite closure"[44] process with regard to the sociostatutary selection effected by the *sernɓe* among their disciples. This explains why even today, *ajami* is a term generally unknown to the inhabitants of the Senegal Valley.

Ajami as used along the banks of Senegal river is thus in many ways the inverse of what the same script represents in other Fula-speaking areas. This conclusion invalidates Goody's hypothesis (1968a: 11–12) regarding a general "interest in maintaining a monopoly of the sources of the power" that can be found in literacy, because this kind of monopoly is not systematic at all. On

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[41] In the case of Mali, Ceerno Bokar Tall, Al Hajj Umar's grandnephew, developed an esoteric and dogmatic teaching method, the *Mā'd-dīn* 'What is religion?', using mnemonic schemes to develop a series of points answering this question (Brenner 1984: 95, 1985).

[42] For a list of works about and by Nana Asma'u, as well as literature produced in Sokoto, see Robinson (2004: 151–152).

[43] El Adnani's book (2007) provides other views than Bah's discourse (1992: 53), by considering the Tijāniyya a *ṭarīqa* that was more democratic than the Qādiriyya.

[44] The 'elite closure' concept has been developed by Myers-Scotton (1993); the same kind of phenomenon has also been described by the French political scientist J.-F. Bayart (1989).

the one hand, it is largely the intellectual property of a literate elite, which, even within itself, does not seek to transmit scriptural competence. On the other hand, when speaking about other Fulani contexts, this writing is a tool for the dissemination of knowledge among those who were deprived of it. Moreover, in the Valley, Ajami has become a sort of scriptural code with secret usages and idiosyncratic spellings, embedded in Arab-Islamic writing culture, whereas elsewhere, it was perceived as a supplementary writing system for those who had not mastered the Arabic language.

5. The Advent of the Roman Script, around the Time of Independence[45]

From the 1950–1960s onwards, several factors and events ensured that *abajada*, i.e. Roman script, was the main writing system for Pulaar. Attempts to increase Ajami usage were fewer and did not appear until the 1980s. The socio-historical determinism that circumscribed Ajami in Fuuta Tooro continued throughout the colonial period, and when independence was obtained and the question arose of how to write local languages, the Roman script was immediately chosen over the Arabic script.

There are several reasons for this. On the Senegalese side, the Haalpulaar'en 'Arabists' did not propagate the popularization of 'their' Pulaar writing system, i.e. Ajami. Instead, they attempted to preserve it as an attribute of their scholarly and clerical class, which was already weakened by the colonial administration and education, as well as by the emergence of other influential and attractive socio-religious models, such as Mouridism.[46] The Wolofization phenomenon (McLaughlin 2008; O'Brien 1998) was also a determining factor in pro-Fula language and culture activism (McLaughlin 1995). Rooted in the colonial period, it became more and more manifest in urban areas and in the media. This Wolofization was perceived by Haalpulaar'en as a threat of acculturation and loss of Fulani/Haalpulaar identity.

In Mauritania, the situation was quite different. The Arabization policy practiced by the Beydan in power in the young Islamic republic brought about an earlier Ajami boom to the Negro-Mauritanian communities, for

45 See also Humery (2011) for a condensed history of the 'Pulaar movement' in Senegal, as well as the history of Pulaar writing.

46 Mouridism or *Muridiyya* is one of the major Sufi orders in Senegal, founded by Amadu Bamba. The word *murid* means 'novice'.

whom the challenge posed by writing in both their mother tongues and Roman script crystallized in the context of emerging socio-political tensions.

The 'Pulaar Movement'[47] was born as a response to the threats of Wolofization and Arabization. Using Roman script not only countered the ongoing Arabization in Mauritania, but also the Wolofization in Senegal, which also used an Arabic-based orthography.[48] In both countries, a consensus for *abajada*, Roman script, immediately imposed itself.

In the late 1950s, a synergy between high school and university students from both sides led to the emergence of the ARP (Association for the Renaissance of Pulaar), which was to play an essential role in the development of Pulaar writing practices. This association campaigned for Fulani culture and language and advocated the use of Roman script. Its activists started a literacy campaign, although more in French than in Pulaar during that time. The writing of Pulaar language was not adopted as a central issue until the 1980s. At their initiative, several conferences were held on both sides of the river, as well as in Cairo, where a substantial Fulani community of students of Arabic, especially from Mauritania, were also confronting the sensitive Pulaar/Fulfulde writing question (Humery 2012). A Roman-based orthography was drawn up at these conventions even before the 1966 Bamako Conference.[49]

The Bamako Conference, organized by UNESCO and attended by the ARP, endorsed adapting Roman script to each major West African language (Sow 1977: 97; Mohamadou 2005).[50] According to the linguist A.I. Sow (1977: 101), the aim was "to secure transcripts of international and inter-African character". The "historical nature" of this choice of a Roman-based script was argued by referring to the existence of a vast literature in Nigeria since 1930, stemming from the Anglo-Saxon colonial policy, which encouraged writing Hausa and Fulfulde in this script, with the addition of hooked letters.

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47 This is the term I use for this socio-cultural nationalism.

48 Although *wolofal*, i.e. Wolof written in an Arabic-based orthography, continued to exist, a Roman-based orthography has been developed and subsequently used for the writing of Wolof as well.

49 Fula had already been transcribed using a Roman-based orthography for quite some time, especially by colonial administrator-ethnographers (Faidherbe, Delafosse, Gaden, Vieillard). Concerning the diversity of transcriptions developed by linguists in the first half of the 20th century, see Mohamadou (2005).

50 The Hausa, Kanuri, Mandingo, Fulani, Songhai and Tamashek-Zarma languages.

The conference had a strong impact on Fula literacy development for two reasons. First, as texts were published, adherence to its recommendations spread within and between countries.[51] This led to a homogenous written form across various genres, including "scientific publications, [...] biblical texts, [...] literacy textbooks or [...] journalistic texts (Mohamadou 2005: 148)". Additionally, Ajami had no significant mobilization effort behind it, and codifying its transcription was not even considered until much later; as a result, *abajada* and therefore Roman script faced no real competitors. UNESCO was also the main driving force behind the use of Arabic-based script, albeit not before 1983–1984, when other Arab countries became motivated to support Ajami alphabets for West African languages, including Wolof in Senegal (Cissé 2006: 75–76).

The emergence of a single institutionally supported Roman-based orthography for transcribing and disseminating West African languages thus benefitted from converging interests and sensibilities between influential linguistic players (writers, public figures, sociocultural activists), as well as national and international language policies.[52] Even the Mauritanian government, through its Arabization policy[53] and support of Ajami, fueled this general trend by provoking a strong reaction against the *alkule Mbagne* standard orthography (see above, note 10).

The attendance of a famous figure such as Amadou Hampâté Bâ at the Bamako conference illustrates the antagonism generated by the choice of a writing system for writing in Pulaar at this crucial time. Indeed, although this cultural mediator (Triaud 2009) used and disseminated both alphabets,[54] publicly, he only put forth support for standardizing the use of Roman script (Bah 1972: 31). Moreover, the bulk of his work in Pulaar/Fulfulde (he also wrote in French) was produced in Roman-based script, including his bilingual French-Fulani publications (Seydou 1993). It is most interesting in this context to see the different and contradictory explanations for his position. While some say he only defended the *abajada*, others counter that

51 This was not the case for other languages, such as Mandingo (Calvet 1987: 220).

52 In Senegal, the first rules for transcribing the national languages were articulated in 1968 and 1971.

53 About this Mauritanian linguistic policy in favor of the Arabic language (and script), see Taine-Cheikh (2004, 1995) and Queffelec & Zein (2001).

54 "A Bamako, Amadou Hampâté Bâ s'emploie activement à diffuser, par fascicules, le texte complet du Coran en langue peul et en caractères arabes" [While living in Bamako, Amadou Hampâté Bâ 'actively' released installments of the Qur'ān in Fula language and in Arabic characters] (Monteil 1980: 306).

he supported Pulaar Ajami[55] as a way of limiting the Arabization of Sudan, which he denounced (Brenner 2000: 305), by promoting a locally grounded vernacular Islam.

6. Factors Leading to the Consolidation of *Abajada*

Like Hampâté Bâ, all actors who supported the Pulaar movement for *abajada*, i.e. writing in Roman script, seemed to reject not Islam but 'Arabism' (Monteil 1980: 310) and Arabization, or at least displayed a preferential attachment to or influence by the Western world, as is the case for most other African languages written in Roman script. Two key figures of the movement, Yero Dooro Diallo and Mamadou Samba Diop ('*Murtuɗo*'), perfectly illustrate this stance; both claimed a scholarly and heritage-based Muslim identity, while rejecting an imposed and exclusively Arab Islam.

Yero Dooro Diallo's formation is emblematic. This radio personality, writer, professor of Arabic and cultural activist was not only the president of the ARP; upon his return from Egypt in the early 1980s, he also instigated the association's position in favor of grassroots literacy in Pulaar. Although being a Pulaar writing activist, he was also an Arabist, knowledgeable in the fields of religion and Arabic language from his years in Cairo (1960–1970). Born in Ferlo, and like many young Senegalese and Mauritanians of *Fulɓe* or *Fulaaɓe* origin, he made his *hiǧra* to Al-Azhar, which for centuries had been a major centre for sub-Saharan Islamic studies (Hunwick 2006). This migration by the *Fulɓe* to Cairo for an Islamic education began in the late 1950s and lasted until 1970–1980, favored by the context of reconciliation between Arab and Sudano-Sahelian countries.

The most influential person was, however, a marabout from the same social background, Mahmoud Ba. He converted to Sunni Islam along with many *Fulɓe*, who had until then been pagans, and founded the Al-Falah

[55] According to the linguist Yero Sylla (interview in Dakar on October 23, 1996), at the Bamako conference, Amadou Hampâté Bâ proposed to codify Ajami to harmonize variants in transcription. M.S. Diop ('*Murtuɗo*') describes an attempt—in vain—by Moorish authorities to rally intellectuals around the cause of Arabic script before the conference. Fulani Arabist intellectuals were invited to support this cause, such as Mohammad Bâ Galli, El Hajj Mamadou Ba (the great *ceerno* of Jowol), and Kibel Ali Diallo, but only the last agreed. Hampâté Bâ's attachment to writing African languages continues the philosophy of his uncle and teacher, Ceerno Bokar Taal, who passed his knowledge on to a much larger group of people than just his Arabist disciples (on the latter, see above, note 41).

schools, which emphasized Arabic in the curriculum.[56] He encouraged his followers to migrate and learn Arabic and become educated in Arabo-Islamic matters. In particular, those of his disciples who went to Cairo, unlike students who went to other Arab countries,[57] were opposed to writing their native language in Ajami. In addition to the specific interests linked with the development of a Pulaar literacy in their respective native countries, the racism experienced by these students in Cairo made them oppose Arabism[58] and support a pro-Fulani cultural revival. Therefore, instead of becoming pro-Arabic activists or 'Arabo-Muslims', the disciples of Mahmoud Ba became anti-Arabic. This manifested itself in the rejection of both Arabic and Arabic script, and in the choice of Roman-based script to write their own language.

The presence of a Fulani community in France also contributed to the development of Pulaar literature in Roman script. Some organizations took on publishing activities; others began offering literacy classes to the children of Pulaar-speaking migrants or in African workers' residences, always using *abajada*, i.e. Roman script. These organizations now trace their roots to the 1980s, to immigrants to France who maintained regular links with Pulaar activists in Senegal, Mauritania, and Arab countries. Initially, there may have been some hesitation in these organizations about the choice of a writing system, but this did not persist for long, not only for practical reasons, but also because Pulaar Movement activists usually felt that the co-existence of different writing systems for Fula would weaken the spread of literacy, because of the scattering of resources, and probably also because of the threat of division amongst Fula speakers, since each writing system was associated with certain ideological and sociological interests. For the Pulaar Movement activists, supporting Fula literacy expansion meant to make a clear choice for one of the writing systems and to avoid a plurality of writing systems.

The choice of Roman script for the development of Pulaar writing was thus reinforced through a transnational and international network. This

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56 For a biography of this 'revolutionary' Arabist and more information about the Al-Falah schools, see Kane (1997); see also Sall (1999), Ciavolella (2010).

57 Mamadou N'Diaye, in an interview in Dakar on October 15, 1996, said that students in Sudan, for example, did not suffer the same anti-Black ostracism as those in Egypt, and therefore remained supporters of a writing system borrowed from Arabic, i.e. using both Arabic language and script.

58 The stigma and the difficulties of these sub-Saharan students in Cairo persist until today (Bava 2011). See also Schmitz (2006) and Timera (2008) about the rejection of their form of Islam that many sub-Saharan people have been facing for centuries.

network did not work in isolation, as Fulani activists from their respective native or migration countries interacted with other actors and factors, contributing to the success of Pulaar *abajada*.

The advent of computers, which in Senegal were initially only available with Latin keyboards and fonts, also played an important role in the publication and dissemination of this emerging literature. With the help of computers, it became possible to create fonts fully corresponding to the Bamako alphabet; moreover, they offered easy mass-reproduction of texts. The very first Apple computer model available on the U.S. market was used by *Goomu*[59] in the late 1980s to edit the first books in Pulaar. The commitment of the American linguist Sonja Fagerberg-Diallo, who worked with this group of Fula writers, facilitated the transfer of technology, and elicited funding from Western donors, in particular Protestants (for instance, the Lutherian World Relief and the Summer Institute of Linguistics), for the financing of basic education and publication in African languages.

During the same period, the Senegal Valley was targeted by many NGOs which participated extensively in Pulaar literacy and publication. Sensitive to the situation of an area marked by the droughts of the 1970s, these Western NGOs and donors kept in mind international goals in the fight against illiteracy. They adopted a functionalist approach to basic education, which prevailed in this period, and supported the idea of literacy activities in local languages. Whenever literacy classes were given at the initiative of such organizations guided by demand from village communities, there was never any question of conducting them in Ajami and therefore Arabic script.

7. Conclusion and Outlook

Pulaar writing in Senegal and Mauritania, and the differences observed between Fulani areas, demonstrate how the diffusion of a writing system takes place within a social, historical, and political context, even if practical aspects should also be taken into account. This conclusion is consistent with Rodinson's (1963: 263) analysis, which takes an even more radical position regarding the marginality of technical factors:

> When it comes to […] replacing one writing system with another, or adopting a writing system, social factors are much more important, while technical factors play virtually no role.

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[59] *Goomu Winndiyankooɓe Ɗemɗe Ngenndiije*, or Initiative for the Promotion of Books in National Languages.

The above discussion of socio-political factors has made it clear that social factors join around an introversion/extroversion paradigm. These factors have another common trait as well, namely that of a relationship to knowledge underpinned by a relationship to power (monopoly *vs.* dissemination).

Today, the writing of Pulaar in the Bamako alphabet is seen as a solid gain by most of Haalpulaar'en concerned by literacy issues. However, even if the coexistence of Arabic-based and Roman-based script systems does not present strong or objective difficulties, but mainly complementary factors, the reality of different trends on this issue is undeniable. Speaking about the relationship between the graphic systems, one of our interviewees evoked a 'future problem'. This is significant and it underlines the social pressure that can be perceived, aiming at giving more importance to Ajami, as if this writing system has not yet had its last word, despite the current domination of *abajada*. Another interviewee described jealousy between the two 'sides', echoing normative comments we collected on Ajami, sometimes seen as 'a step back', and at other times as an indicator of being a 'good Muslim'.

During the 2000s, Pulaar writing culture switched to new forms and literacy practices through information and communication technology. Email and text messaging have now become common tools of communication for speakers of African languages (Lexander 2010; Bruijn, Nyamnjoh & Brinkman 2009). Pulaar is well represented on the web through blogs, forums, and sites representing Fulani cultural, linguistic, and political struggles (the latter particulary in Mauritania). This turn in Pulaar information and communication technology usage has helped to compensate for the phasing out of NGOs and donors since 1995 and the transfer of the management of literacy activities to notable families in the villages, which has contributed to the decline of this basic education. Thanks to information and communication technology, the writing of Fulani now seems assured, and Roman script usage is further strengthened by the fact that keyboards and fonts for writing Ajami and therefore Arabic script are recent, marginal, and rarely used.

Still, the manuscripts available in Ajami have thus far been little exploited by the scientific community; an unknown number of scholarly and creative texts, still possessed by families of the Senegal River Valley, remains to be studied, even if other regions of Africa may have been more prolific in Ajami. Another issue, which needs reassessment, is the validity of existing surveys or assessments on literacy rates. Usually, skills in Ajami or Arabic script are not accurately represented. While a potential for the acquisition of literacy in African languages by means of Arabic script does in fact exist (Lüpke 2004; Cissé 2006), consideration must be given to the threat of dispersal of means

and its effect on accessing, maintaining, and sharing literacy practices and writing culture within a community, or even the risk of social confrontation between supporters of each writing system. But the relevance of such threats is dependent on the social, historical, and political context of each writing system. It is clear, however, that without any satisfactory codification, the opportunity for expansion, or even the ability to maintain Fula writing in Ajami in Fuuta Tooro remains uncertain, even more so if a large share of the population seems to have already made their own choice.

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AJAMI SCRIPTS FOR MANDE LANGUAGES[*]

Valentin Vydrin

1. Introduction

It is a commonplace for papers dealing with African Ajami[1] to say that the Ajami tradition is neglected by scholars. And it will not be an exaggeration to say that Mande Ajami writings are stepchildren of the African Ajami studies: not a single manuscript was published during the colonial period, and even afterwards, such publications remain very few (Giesing & Vydrine 2007; Schaffer 1975; Vydrine 1998). Among the West African Arabographic manuscripts identified recently as written in African languages (Hunwick et al. 2003), not a single Mande text has been attested. There are good reasons to consider Manding Ajami understudied by the Western scholarly tradition, and the quasi-absence of special publications is due to a lack of attention by researchers.

2. The Historical Situation

Mande people were among the first in West Africa to enter into contact with Islamic culture and the Arabic language. One should not forget that out of three great Medieval empires of Western Sudan, two were created by the Mande.

The Ancient Ghana (Wagadu) Empire, whose emergence is lost in the ages, is associated with the Soninke (Sarakole) people. During the five centuries of the intense commercial and cultural contacts with Northern Africa, an Islamized stratum of Soninke traders, the *jùla*, emerged; as for the political elite of Wagadu, it remained animist by the time of the reports by al-Bakrī

[*] This work is related to the research strand 6 "Language resources" of the Labex EFL (financed by the AVR/CGI). I would like to thank Charles Riley who volunteered to correct my English.

[1] Arabographic writing systems for languages other than Arabic.

(11th century) and al-ʾIdrīsī (12th century). Reports from Wagadu by Arabic authors are brief, and no written document of Wagadu origin has reached us. Therefore, any conjecture concerning Ajami writing in Wagadu would be of purely speculative nature. Modern Soninke society is strongly Islamized, and Islam is regarded as the central component of Soninke identity.[2] However, no significant tradition of Soninke Ajami seems to exist, although it might be used occasionally by those Soninke who are literate in Arabic.[3]

On the other hand, it should be mentioned that the *jùla* network dating back to the Ancient Ghana played a tremendous role in the Islamization of Western Sudan:

> Juula were undoubtedly among the first West Africans to acquire Islamic knowledge, being originally a merchant group who traded gold with North African merchants in Ancient Ghana. (Hunwick et al. 2003: 1)

They were also the main agents in the creation of the local literary tradition in Arabic language and in Ajami. The question (which will hardly be ever answered) is: Was the literary tradition established as early as in Ghana, or only later?

We are much better informed about the Ancient Mali Empire (beginning from the 13th century[4]), both by Arab authors and through an extremely rich Manding oral tradition. Its rulers were Muslims and went to Mecca,[5] and Ibn Baṭṭūṭa wrote about the fervour of inhabitants of Mali and the practice of chaining young people who were negligent in learning the Qurʾān. Meanwhile, the predominant opinion among the historians (which I share) seems to be that the Islamization of Ancient Mali concerned mainly the commercial and ruling elites, and only to a much lesser extent the broad masses. Here again, no written document from inside Ancient Mali has reached our

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2 Meanwhile, for significant groups of Soninke, Islamization might be a relatively recent phenomenon: according to reports by European authors, non-Muslim beliefs were current there at the beginning of the colonial era (Pollet & Winter 1971: 471–485).

3 My only encounter with this script took place in November 1992, when I traveled by train from Bamako to Kayes. A fellow traveler, who was a Soninke marabout, wrote on my request, quite naturally, a page-long text in Soninke Ajami, but he seemed to attach little value to such writings.

4 The end of Ancient Mali is difficult to date, for its decline was gradual and poorly documented.

5 Certain modern griots and historians (e.g. Kántɛ 1992) assert that even Sunjata Keita, the cultural hero of Manding and the legendary founder of Ancient Mali, was a Muslim. However, this claim looks like an adaptation of the Sunjata image to the realities of modern Manding society, which is becoming more and more Islamized.

time, and no mention of the use of Manding Ajami is found in the writings by Arabic authors. Without any evidence, we can only conjecture its existence at the times of Mansa Musa (reigned approximately 1311–1337 or 1332) or Mansa Suleyman (reigned approximately 1340/41–1359/60).

The Mandingization of a large segment of the *jùla* network dates back to the period of Ancient Mali: they may have switched to the predominant language of Mali,[6] and, at the same time, they may have been joined by new people of Manding origin.

A negative factor for the continuity in the Manding literary tradition (if there was any) was a disruption of urban culture. Historians argue about the whereabouts of the splendid capital of Ancient Mali described by Arab Medieval authors; this and other urban centres disappeared without a trace, unlike the Songhai Empire metropolises of Djenne, Gao and Timbuktu, where numerous manuscripts have been preserved.

After the decline of Mali and the disappearance of its economic, administrative and cultural centres, each of its former constituting parts evolved on its own.

Vast territories where the Manding language was spread fell within the sphere of control of non-Muslim political organisms, such as the Bamana Kingdom of Segu (18th century–1861), or the Kaabu confederation (15th century–1867) in southern Senegambia. In Segu, commercial activities were in the hands of Soninke merchants, while the Manding population was largely pagan; therefore, there was no incentive for the development of Manding Ajami writing (in any case, unambiguous accounts of Ajami presence in the Segu Empire seem to be lacking).

In southern Senegambia, where non-Manding populations predominated, Manding was a prestigious language of the pagan aristocracy and, on the other hand, the language of the Muslim merchant network of Jakhanke. The existence of Manding Ajami in that area was already attested in the first half of the 18th century (Labat 1728; cited by Giesing & Costa-Dias 2007: 63), long before the pagan rule of the *ñàncoo* elite of the Kaabu was definitely smashed by Muslim Fulbe troops from Fuuta Jalon. In any case, the emergence of Ajami is not related to the establishment of a Muslim political power in this area: the main holders of Islamic writing in the area, the Jakhanke merchants, were for centuries integrated into the social system of

[6] Numerous clans of Muslim clerics and merchants belonging today to the Manding communities claim to be Soninke by origin, such as the Ture, the Sise, the Komma, or the Jaane.

the Kaabu confederation and often served as advisers and intermediates for the political elites.[7]

To the south of the Segu Kingdom, the Manding-speaking Muslim *jùla* maintained and reinforced their role in the spread of Islam, to the extent that Manding grew to be 'the language of Islam' in vast areas of the Western Sudan. In some instances, the prominent position of the *jùla* in the economic and religious spheres was converted into political power: the Kong Empire emerged in the 18th and 19th century, and Samori Ture's Empire in the second half of the 19th century. It is the second major area (beside southern Senegambia) where Manding Ajami was certainly used.

3. Colonial Scholars and Manding Ajami

The only record of the existence of Manding Ajami in French colonial studies seems to be by Maurice Delafosse (1904: 259 ff.), who provided basic reading rules and a couple of words in the Ivoirian Jula Ajami. Simultaneously, he expressed his utter contempt for this writing system. Delafosse's low opinion may have predetermined a quasi-total neglect of Manding Ajami by French colonial scholars and the absence of any mention of this writing tradition in subsequent academic literature.

Due to the so-called 'indirect rule' practiced by the British, one would expect them to have given more attention to this writing tradition. However, the tiny Gambia was not their most important colony in Africa at all, and linguistic research was more or less restricted to aspects of practical relevance: a couple of practical textbooks[8] and a small dictionary of Mandinka appeared; on the eve of independence of Gambia (1965), an academic grammar of Mandinka (Rowlands 1959), as well as a practical manual of Ajami (Addis 1963) were published, but none of these studies contained a collection of manuscripts or an analysis of the real function of Ajami. In Portuguese Guinea and southern Senegal no study on Ajami has ever been carried out; it was merely mentioned by Antonio Carreira (1947).

Such studies were postponed to a period when a new scholarly paradigm replaced the colonial scholarly tradition.

[7] There is an abundant literature about Jakhanke, their history and social functions; among the most recent publications, see Giesing & Costa-Dias (2007); Giesing & Vydrine (2007).

[8] Most of them merely mention the existence of Ajami writing; the first such report seems to be by MacBrair (1837). Only Hamlyn (1935) provides a description of the rules of Ajami and a small sample text.

4. The Current Situation[9]

In the Manding world today, we observe a competition among three writing systems: Roman, Ajami, and N'ko. Of these, Ajami is in the weakest position, for a number of reasons: it is the least adapted to the phonological systems of the Manding languages; it is the least standardized; it is practically never used for publications and is therefore restricted to personal use; there is no country where Ajami has ever been given any official status or enjoyed any kind of official support.

The Manding language area spans across several countries (see Map 1), and in each country the situation is different. In the following chapters each area is discussed seperately.[10]

4.1. *Southern Senegambia*

This is today the main stronghold of Manding Ajami. Within this region, Ajami as a writing system remains so far uncontested and remains practically untouched by the diffusion of N'ko (although a couple of local and individual initiatives in this direction have been attested), and the impact of literacy campaigns in Roman script seems to be rather low. Unfortunately, there are no reliable statistics. Estimations by UNESCO (1985) giving a 50 % rate of literacy in the Ajami writing system among the Mandinka-speaking populations of Gambia can hardly be taken serious. My personal impression from Pakao (Casamance, Senegal)[11] is that Ajami literacy remains rather in a latent state. For religious purposes, people write in Arabic language and script, and for administrative ones, in French. Meanwhile, Ajami is being used for all other needs, although these are not very numerous. People may use it for correspondence and for personal notes; they mention the existence of *tariku* 'chronicles' elsewhere (however, when I came to the indicated village, it turned out that these *tariku* texts were not available, and yet another village was given as their whereabouts …).[12] During my short sojourn in the

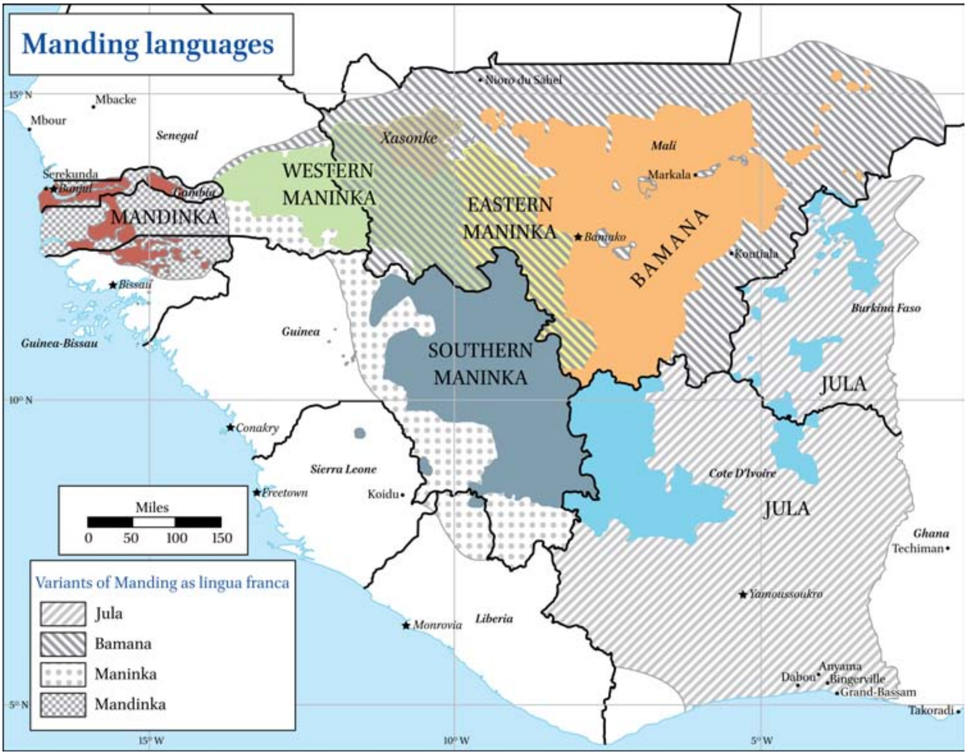
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9 I am aware of the ISESCO effort in standardization of the Ajami writing systems for Manding, Soninke, and Susu languages. However, in the following I am not going to survey the performance of the standardized Ajami; I will deal only with 'spontaneous' Ajami scripts for Mande languages.

10 Unfortunately, I have no information concerning Manding Ajami in Burkina Faso.

11 From a fortnight trip to Ziguinchor, then to Samakunda and neighbouring villages to the east of Marsassoum, in the Pakao area.

12 Two explanations seem to me equally plausible: (a) there are no chronicles in the area, there is just an idea that they should exist somewhere; (b) the chronicles exist, but people are



Map 1. The Manding language area

Mandinka villages, I never witnessed Ajami being used for any practical purpose. However, on the day preceding my departure from the Samakun village, my host Abdulay Senghor Daafee produced a sheet of paper with Ajami writings which turned out to be hunters' incantations (the texts are reproduced and analyzed in Dumestre & Vydrin in the present volume). It is indicative that Abdulay himself (a very smart and industrious man otherwise) had trouble with reading this text; it was evident that he had not exercised reading it often.

Pakao is usually regarded as a bulwark of Muslim faith and one could therefore expect a higher proficiency in the use of Arabic writings by its inhabitants. Yet, surprisingly, Ajami is used very little in Pakao. Yet, this

not ready to show their sacred writings to a stranger, especially a White, who came to their village just for a couple of days.

does not allow for generalizations across the whole of the Mandinka language area, since there is a lack of any serious study on this.[13] The lull in currency of Manding Ajami may be a local phenomenon; it may also be explained through a certain progress in formal schooling and alphabetization in Mandinka in Roman script. Mandinka Ajami might be more present in Gambia, where it is occasionally used in the publicity of government bodies and NGOs. One should also mention a publication of the Gospel of Mark in Mandinka Ajami by the W.E.C. (Worldwide Evangelization for Christ) Mission in the 1990s.[14] In Guinea-Bissau, according to Cornelia Giesing (personal communication), the period of 1980–1990s was characterized by a lull in the use of the Mandinka Ajami, which recently gave place to a revival of interest: new copies of old manuscripts are being produced, and nowadays there are young people using Ajami for their everyday personal notes.

Nonetheless, manuscripts in Mandinka Ajami do exist. Apart from those which have been already published (Giesing & Vydrine 2007; Schaffer 1975; Vydrine 1998), Cornelia Giesing (personal communication) has collected half a dozen manuscripts in different villages of Guinea-Bissau, and some other Ajami texts were found by Eduardo Costa-Dias (personal communication). In 2004, Fallou Ngom undertook a travel "to collect historical and cultural texts and religious poems and to take digital images of Wolof, Pulaar and Mandinka Ajami manuscripts used in major Senegalese Muslim communities" (Ngom 2010). Unfortunately, Ngom does not specify the results of his travel with respect to Mandinka.[15]

4.2. *Guinea*

In pre-colonial times, the Maninka speaking area of today's Republic of Guinea was another stronghold of Manding Ajami. Two names should be

[13] Compare this however, with the rather conservative estimates of the value of Pular Ajami in Senegal in Marie-Ève Humery's paper in the present volume.

[14] W.E.C. Missionaries in Serrekunda explained to me the story of this publication as follows. After the Gospel of Mark was published in Mandinka in Roman script, a Mandinka man from a neighbouring village called on the missionaries and asked why they would not publish the book in Ajami instead. When the missionaries told him of their lack of skill in Ajami, he offered his assistance, and the next time he came with a pile of sheets, the entire book being retranscribed in Ajami. The missionaries photocopied his writings and published it as a book.

[15] In his interview with the BBC on September 17, 2010 (http://www.theworld.org/2010/09/17/africa-ajami-writing/comment-page-1/#comment-17197, accessed December 24, 2010), Fallou Ngom speaks about a poem in Mandinka Ajami cursing Hitler and dating back to the period of World War II. However, on his site "Ajami in the Senegambia" http://westafricanislam.matrix.msu.edu/ajami/, Ngom provides no specific information about manuscripts in Mandinka.

mentioned in this relation: Alfa Mahmud Kaba was a mid-19th century political leader and writer from Kankan who translated some Arabic poetry into Maninka (in Arabic-based script), while Karamoko Talibi Kaba was a poet and translator of Islamic literature into Maninka, who lived in Kankan in the first half of the 20th century (Condé 2008). Ajami suffered a setback during Sékou Touré's era (1958–1984, especially in 1967–1984), as the totalitarian state stood behind the promotion of the Roman script orthographies for Guinean languages. Another great blow was dealt to Maninka Ajami by the creation of N'ko alphabet in 1949 by Suleymana Kante, a writing system, which was able to represent the Maninka phonological system adequately including its tones. The N'ko writing spread very quickly (in spite of a slowdown during Sékou Touré's times), and in today's Guinea it enjoys an unchallenged popularity and prestige among Maninka. Maninka Ajami still persists in Guinea in a semi-clandestine form, its proponents being labeled by militants of the N'ko movement as backward (Ibrahima Sory 2 Condé, personal communication); its outlook is pretty dim.

Unfortunately, no sample of the Maninka Ajami from Upper Guinea is available.

4.3. *Côte d'Ivoire*

In Côte d' Ivoire, Jula was written in Ajami at the beginning of 20th century, as testified by Maurice Delafosse (1904) with respect to Bonduku (in the east of the country). In Samatigila, near Odienné (northeast), Ajami has been witnessed to be used for writing Muslim poetry in the milieu of Hamalists[16] (Kalilou Tera, personal communication). Unfortunately, no further evidence is available so far.

4.4. *Bamana*

The Islamization of Bamana in Mali accelerated with El Hadj Umar's conquest and the fall of the Segu Kingdom. At the beginning of the 20th century, Hyppolyte Bazin (1906: XXIII) wrote:

> En fait d' écriture, les Bambara ne connaissent que les caractères arabes appelés par eux l' écriture des Noirs. Mais il n'y a, en fait, à savoir en lire ou tracer les caractères que ceux qui ont étudié dans les écoles des marabouts, et ceux-là sont bien rares.[17]

[16] Ḥamāliyya is a Muslim brotherhood in West Africa, its history being widely covered in the literature. See, among many other publications Cissé (2005) or Traoré (1983).

[17] "In fact when it comes to writing, the Bambara do not know anything but Arabic script,

This witness did not clarify whether Bamana or Arabic itself was written in Arabic script. However, the texts published in Dumestre & Vydrin in this volume and dating back to 1911 testify that Bamana Ajami was in use to a certain extent, at least in San (which was and is an ancient commercial center on the periphery of the Bamana area). According to Kalilou Tera (personal communication), who is a native of San, a Sumare cleric family possesses an Ajami manuscript (or maybe even more than one) on the history of San.

By the 1990s, Bamana Ajami was sporadically used in Mali for personal purposes (see reports in Vydrine 1998: 15–17, 63–64) by members of the Islamic intelligentsia and by traditional merchants. No new evidence has appeared in the first decade of this century. In all likelihood, this writing system has little chance in Mali, where the major combatants of the 'war of scriptures' are Roman script and N'ko: the former is supported by the official establishments (although in a chronically dysfunctional way), and the latter enjoys the charisma of being 'authentic Manding writing' and a great deal of enthusiasm among its supporters. This great battle leaves little or no space for Ajami, which is poorly adapted to the specifics of the Bamana language and continues to languish in the shadow of Qur'anic education, where it recurs from time to time as an auxiliary means to writing.[18]

Outside the Manding language branch, there are two Mande languages whose speakers use Ajami to a certain extent. Both cases were discussed in Vydrine (1998); unfortunately, no further evidence has been found since.

4.5. *Mogofin* (*Mikhifore*)

Mogofin (Mikhifore) is a tiny ethnic group[19] in the northwest of Guinea, to the south of Boke. The Mogofin language belongs to the Mokole group of Mande, it is particularly close to Kakabe spoken in the central Fuuta Jalon (an endangered language being ousted by the Pulaar, see Vydrin & Vydrina

which is called writing of the Blacks amongst them. But only those who did their studies in the Muslim cleric schools can read or trace the characters, and they are few." [Translations are my own.]

[18] In this context, an experimental Bamana Ajami literacy work carried out by a Morocco-financed NGO in a Bamana village is of interest. The success story of this experiment was recounted in a presentation by Mohamed Chtatou at the TASIA workshop (Cologne, April 06–07, 2010), but unfortunately, the name of the village was not revealed. However, it remains a selective action with a limited impact. In Mali, when it comes to literacy campaigns, difficulties usually do not lie in launching an experiment, but in generalizing its results.

[19] 20,000 speakers, according to a 2012 estimate.

2010). Today's speakers of Mogofin are descendants of several waves of refugees from Fuuta Jalon during the period following the 18th century jihad resulting in the establishment of a theocratic Fulbe state. They rejected Islam and seem to have remained animists until the beginning of the 20th century (N'Daou 1999: 163). Their conversion to Islam is therefore a recent phenomenon, and Mogofin Ajami may have appeared not long ago, under the influence of the Pulaar Ajami tradition. Four texts written by Alhousseyni Diallo, a young Mogofin living in Conakry, published and analyzed in Vydrine (1998), remain the only document of this writing. In the meantime, Alhousseyni affirms that Ajami is quite alive among the Mogofin, who regularly use it for correspondence.

4.6. *Susu* (*Soso*)

Susu (Soso) language was spoken in Fuuta Jalon till the 18th century jihad.[20] Ousted by Muslim Fulbe, ancestors of modern Susu migrated to the coast, while other segments of the same group moved to the north, northeast and southeast; their descendants are the modern-day Jalonke (in the north) and Yalunka (in the southeast). Today, Susu is the third largest language of Guinea (1,200,000 to 2,000,000 speakers). Again, their Islamization is relatively recent, and therefore Susu Ajami cannot be ancient either. Apart from two Arabic-script texts published in Vydrine (1998), I do not possess any other sample of such texts.[21]

5. Grammatological Properties of Mande Ajami

Mande phonological and morphological systems are radically different from Arabic: all Mande languages in question are tonal and most have seven vowels (with the exception of Mandinka and Soninke which have five vowels). They lack inflection, and vocalic oppositions serve mainly for lexical differentiation, but only marginally for grammatical ones. Furthermore, Mande

[20] There is a well-entrenched tradition among historians to consider modern Susu as descendants of the ancient kingdom of Soso ruled in 13th century by Sumaoro Kante, a rival of Sunjata Keita. Without examining this hypothesis in detail, I just want to mention that the closeness between the Susu language and Manding is often overrated. In reality, it turns out to be closer to the Southwestern Mande languages (Mende, Looma, Kpelle, Loko, Bandi, Zialo) than to Manding (Vydrin 2009).

[21] A couple of years ago in Conakry, I saw a Gospel in Susu Ajami published by the Pioneer Bible Translators mission. Unfortunately, I could not get a copy of this book.

languages do not have so called 'emphatic consonants' (i.e. velarized/pharyngealized consonants), as does Arabic. As a consequence, the Arabic script system cannot be adequately applied to Mande languages without major adaptations.

In the following, the graphemic inventories of each Mande Ajami variety will be represented in a concise way (for more detailed presentations, see Vydrine 1998; Giesing & Vydrine 2007; Dumestre & Vydrin, this volume). Taking into account the limited corpora available, all generalizations should be regarded as preliminary, and they will certainly be amended by new sources brought into scholarly circulation.

Before examining the grammatological properties of Arabic-based script as used for the Manding Ajami writing traditions, it should be noted that the following Arabic-script graphemes are generally used unadapted and without differences in meaning:

- ب ⟨b⟩ *b*
- ت ⟨t⟩ *t*
- د ⟨d⟩ *d*
- ر ⟨r⟩ *r*
- س ⟨s⟩ *s*
- ڢ ⟨f_1⟩ *f*
- ک ⟨k_2⟩ *k*
- ل ⟨l⟩ *l*
- م ⟨m⟩ *m*
- ں ⟨n_1⟩ *n*
- ه ⟨h⟩ *h*
- و ⟨w⟩ *w*
- ی ⟨y_1⟩ *y*

With the exception of the Mogofin Ajami, all of these writing traditions use *maġribī* style calligraphic varieties (also referred to as Warš varieties) of the letters *fāʾ* ڢ ⟨f_1⟩ (instead of ف ⟨f⟩), *qāf* ڧ ⟨q_1⟩ (instead of ق ⟨q⟩), and *kāf* ک ⟨k_2⟩ (instead of ك ⟨k⟩) (with *kāf* appearing in initial form in all positions) and *nūn* ں ⟨n_1⟩ (appearing without the superscript dot in final and isolated positions). In all varieties, writing of vowels using diacritics is obligatory (otherwise, the reading of Manding texts would be impossible).

Table 1 presents deviations of the Manding Ajami from Arabic script as used for Arabic.

Table 1. Mande Ajami deviations from Arabic[22]

Phoneme	Mandinka															Bamana 1980-90s				San Bamana 1911	Jula (Delafosse)	Mogofin	Susu
	KS				PB	TBII				TBIII	HM												
	A	F	M	I		A	F	M	I		A	F	M	I		A	F	M	I				
p	پ				?	پ				?	ب					?				ب	پ	پ	?
kp	-				-	-				-	-					-				-	پ	-	-
gb	-				-	-				-	-					-				-	ۋ	-	ف
g	غ ~ ڬ				-	-				-	-					ف				ك (~ ف)	غ	ق	ف
s	س				س ~ ص ~ ش	س ~ ص ~ ش					س					س ~ ش ~ ث				س (~ ش)	س ~ ص ~ ش	س	ش
c	ج ~ چ	ج ~ چ	ذ ~ ذ	ذ ~ ذ	ذ	پ ~ ي					ش					ت ~ ذ ~ ج	ت ~ ذ ~ ج	ت ~ خ ~ ج	ت ~ خ ~ ج	ت	ث	-	-
j	ج	ج	ذ	ذ	ذ ~ ج (~ چ)	ج ~ ڎ	ج ~ ڎ	ذ ~ چ	ذ ~ چ		ج	ج	ذ	ذ		ج ~ ذ	ج ~ ذ	ج ~ خ	ج ~ خ	ج (~ ز)	ذ ~ ج	(ج)	-
ɲ	ي				ي	پ					ث					ى				ن (~ ي)	?	ي ~ ي	ي ~ ي
-ŋo	غُ <ġu> ~ غُ <ġ$_1$u> ~ أ <ʔu>				عُ <ʿu> ~ وُ <wu>	عُ <ʿu>					?					-				-	-	-	-

[22] Graphemes represented in round brackets are rarely used. Where different graphemes for the same sound are used depending on autonomous/independent, final, medial, or initial positioning within spellings, these are in rows denoted by A, F, M, or I, respectively. Diacritics are written on a placeholding ⟨-⟩. Two adjacent placeholders with diacritics, i.e. ⟨–⟩, are co-referential, i.e. both diacritics are superimposed on the same letter. Alternatives are divided by ⟨~⟩.

Phoneme	Mandinka					Bamana 1980-90s	San Bamana 1911	Jula (Delafosse)	Mogofin	Susu
	KS	PB	TBII	TBIII	HM					
	A, F, M, I		A, F, M, I		A, F, M, I	A, F, M, I				
-ŋ or nasal vowel	ـٍ ~ـٓ ~ـٔ	ـًا <-a^n^ʔ> ~ـٓ ~ ـىٍ <-i^n^y_ɪ> ~ـٓ ~ ـٔو <-u^n^w> ~ـٔ ~ ـِن <-i^n^n>	نْ ~ـٓ ~ـٔ ~ـٍ ~ـًا		ـُنو <-unw> ~ ـِنا <-inʔ> ~ـٍ ~ـٓ ~ ـًا <-a^n^ʔ>	Ignored	نْ <n⁰>	-	-	-
syllabic N	نْ	إ <ʔi^n^>	أ <ʔu>	?	?	نْ	نْ <n⁰>	?	أنْ <ʔun⁰>	عُ <ʕu> ~ اعُ <ʕuʔ>
l	ل	ل ~ ض	ل ~ ض	ل ~ ض	ل	ل	ل	ل ~ ض	ل	ل
w	و	و	و		و	و ~ ڡ	و	و	و	و
e	ـٍ ~ـٓ	ـٍ ~ـٓ	ـٍ		ـٍ ~ـٓ	ـَ ~ـٍ ~ـٓ ~ـٍ ~ـٍَ <ae> ~ـٍ <ie> ~ـٍُ <ue>	ـٍ	ـٍ	ـٍ	ـٍ
ɛ	-	-	-	-	-	ـَ ~ـٍ ~ـٓ ~ـٍ	ـٍ ~ـٍَ <ae>	ـٍ	ـٍ	ـٍ

Phoneme	Mandinka															Bamana 1980-90s				San Bamana 1911	Jula (Delafosse)	Mogofin	Susu
	KS				PB	TBII				TBIII	HM												
	A	F	M	I		A	F	M	I		A	F	M	I	A	F	M	I				
																~بَ <ae> ~بِ <ie> ~بُ <ue>							
i			ـٖ ~ـْ		ـٖ ~ـْ			ـٖ					ـٖ			ـَ ~ـٖ ~ـْ			ـٖ	ـٖ	ـٖ	ـٖ
o			ـُ		ـُ			صَ ~طْ ~ضَ		ـُ			ـُ			ـُ			ـُ	ـُ	ـٌ	ـُ
ɔ			ـ		ـ			ـ		ـ			ـ			ـُ ~بُ <ue>			ـُ	ـُ	ـٌ	ـُ
u			ـُ		ـُ			ـُ		ـُ			ـُ			ـُ			ـُ	ـُ	ـُ	ـَ

5.1. *Southern Senegambia*

Mandinka Ajami of the southern Senegambia is documented better than such orthographic traditions from any other region. The analysis of the texts reveals two major varieties: The first was documented in Hamlyn's (1935) sketch, while the second one is to be found elsewhere and should probably be regarded as predominant.

The second and main orthographic tradition of Mandinka Ajami is documented in:

i. The second part of the *Tarikh of Bijini* (Giesing & Vydrine 2007), from the Bijini village in Guinea-Bissau (henceforth TBII).
ii. The third part of the *Tarikh of Bijini* (Giesing & Vydrine 2007) (henceforth TBIII).
iii. The *Pakao Book* (Schaffer 1975; Vydrine 1998), from Casamance, the southern province of Senegal (henceforth PB).
iv. Texts written by my informant Keba Singateh (Vydrine 1998), a native of Gambia (henceforth KS).
v. Hunters's incantations from Pakao (Dumestre & Vydrin, this volume).
vi. The Ajami manual by Addis (1963) (henceforth AD).

The sources vary in the degree of their harmonization: texts of PB and especially TBII are relatively standardized, while those written by KS manifest a much higher degree of variability; Addis (1963) also speaks about a lack of codification in Mandinka texts written in Arabic script.

Below, I provide more detailed discussions of the peculiarities of each variety, as summarized in Table 1.

5.1.1. *Bijini Chronicle, Part II* (*TBII*)

The graphemes ڎ, ذ, and ج are in free variation, all representing *j*. *c* and *ñ* are not distinguished in this orthography, both being designated by پ (occasionally, *c* can also be rendered by ي).[23] *y* is normally written as ى, but in some instances also as ع. ش appears rarely, only in proper nouns, i.e. شَامَ *Saama* (name of a province in Kaabu[24]).

[23] In the available text, these characters never appear in word-final or isolated position. Therefore, it is impossible to figure out which (basic) character shape, i.e. ب ⟨b⟩ or ى ⟨y_1⟩, served as basis for their creation.

[24] This spelling is identical with the Arabic name of Syria. One may not exclude that this coincidence is deliberate.

A striking peculiarity of orthographic practice in TBII, not to be found anywhere else, is the way TBII differentiates between closed and middle vowels (*i* and *e, u* and *o*) when preceded by alveolar consonants: *kasra* ◌ِ ⟨i⟩ and *ḍamma* ◌ُ ⟨u⟩ designate middle vowels *e* and *o*, respectively, on letters representing so-called emphatics in Arabic, i.e. ط ⟨ṭ⟩, ض ⟨ḍ⟩, and ص ⟨ṣ⟩ (cf. below, note 25), while the same diacritics represent closed vowels, i.e. *i* and *u*, respectively, on letters representing the non-emphatic consonants in Arabic, i.e. ت ⟨t⟩, د ⟨d⟩, and س ⟨s⟩. This rule is certainly based on the fact that in Arabic closed vowel phonemes preceded by emphatic consonants are represented by their more open allophones. It is observed quite consistently (there are only a few exceptions attested).[25]

Sukūn ◌ْ ⟨^{0}⟩ is used rarely and its function is not quite clear. It is possible that it designates the absence of a vowel resulting from elision. Vocalic length marking is most often correct and errors are relatively few. Vowels not preceded by consonants are written using regular diacritics on top of ع, ا, or in medial positions on top of ى, each of which functions only as a place-holder without any phonetic value.

Word-final *-ŋ* can be rendered by three different means. A *nūn* ں ⟨n_1⟩ without any diacritics, a *tanwīn*, i.e. ◌ً ⟨a^{n}⟩, ◌ٍ ⟨i^{n}⟩, or ◌ٌ ⟨u^{n}⟩, or a *tanwīn* followed by an *ʾalif*, i.e. ◌ًا ⟨-a^{n}ʾ⟩, ◌ٍا ⟨-i^{n}ʾ⟩, or ◌ٌا ⟨-u^{n}ʾ⟩. Word-internally, *tanwīn* followed by an *ʾalif* is replaced by a *tanwīn* followed by a *nūn*, i.e. ◌ًن ⟨-a^{n}n⟩, ◌ٍن ⟨-i^{n}n⟩, or ◌ٌن ⟨-u^{n}n⟩. A syllabic nasal element, such as the personal pronoun *ń* 'I', is written using *ʾalif* + *ḍamma*, i.e. اُ ⟨ʾu⟩.

5.1.2. *Bijini Chronicle, Part III* (*TBIII*)

Only Part II of the Bijini Chronicle is in Manding Ajami, while the rest of the manuscript is written in Arabic. However, there are proper nouns and single Mandinka phrases inserted into the Arabic text, which permits us to conclude that the rules formulated above for TBII are not applied to TBIII. In particular, the opposition between characters representing emphatic and non-emphatic alveolars in Arabic is not used for differentiation between closed and middle vowels. In fact, letters representing emphatic consonants in Arabic seem to be used more or less at random. *c* is not orthographically differentiated from *j*, with either being written as ذ ⟨ḏ⟩ or ج ⟨ǧ⟩.

[25] It is notable that only alveolar emphatic consonants are involved, while this opposition does not apply with the letters ك and ق, nor with ز and ظ.

The different parts of the Bijini Chronicle are also indicative of a lack of standardization of the orthography, since this document was written by members of two families, Kasama (Parts I and II) and Baayoo (Part III), who both lived in Bijini and were in close contact.

5.1.3. *Pakao Book* (*PB*)

The orthography of this source is relatively harmonized. س ⟨s⟩ and ش ⟨š⟩ are in free variation and may alternate in one and the same word; the same is true for ذ ⟨ḏ⟩ and ج ⟨ǧ⟩. The character ذ may also render the voiceless palatal affricate *c*. As for letters representing Arabic phonemes non-existent in Mandinka, there is a tendency to maintain them in Arabic loanwords and to use them in proper names (it should be noted that the PB contains many names of villages and people).

Closed and middle vowels are not distinguished. Both *u* and *o* are rendered by a *ḍamma* ◌ُ ⟨u⟩, *i* and *e* by *kasra* ◌ِ ⟨i⟩ or *sukūn* ◌ْ ⟨^{0}⟩, indiscriminately. *Sukūn* ◌ْ usually appears after ل ⟨l⟩ and ى ⟨y⟩, but this is rather a trend than a rule; it can occasionally be found in other contexts, too. Vowel length is mostly rendered correctly, and there are only a few cases where otiose length markers appear at the end of a word.

Word-final *-ŋ* is most often rendered by a *tanwīn*, i.e. ◌ً, ◌ٍ, or ◌ٌ. Another frequent means is *tanwīn fatḥa*, i.e. ◌ً, or *tanwīn kasra*, i.e. ◌ٍ, followed by a vocalic length marker, such as ا ⟨ʾ⟩ or ى ⟨y$_{1}$⟩, e.g. تًا ⟨ta^{n}ʾ⟩ *táŋ* 'ten', جَاسِىٍ ⟨ǧaʾsi^{n}y$_{1}$⟩ *Jaasiŋ* (proper name), or مًسَمًى ⟨ma^{n}sama^{n}y$_{1}$⟩ *Mansamaŋ* (proper name). In Part III of PB, a *tanwīn* may be followed by a *nūn* without diacritics, as in بَاكٌن ⟨baʾku^{n}n⟩ *Baakuŋ* (proper name).

The syllabic nasal (at least, in prenasalization) is rendered by *ʾalif* with *kasra*, i.e. إِ ⟨ʾi⟩, as in إٍدُنبِ ⟨ʾi^{n}dunbi⟩ *Ndunbe* (proper name).

5.1.4. *Keba Singateh's Texts*

In comparison with PB and TB, these texts represent a much less standardized style of Mandinka Ajami: vowel length is left underspecified, since short vowels may be written like long ones, and vice-versa, and length markers without any phonological value are omnipresent at word boundaries in certain fragments of his texts (a phenomenon also mentioned by Addis). Letters representing emphatics in Arabic, as well as ش are not used.

An interesting innovation of KS is the writing of the palatal affricates *j* and *c*, for which a new grapheme has been created by merging two existing Arabic graphemes. In word-internal and initial positions, the respective

variants of ج are used, i.e. ج, while in independent and word-final position, ذ appears. Alternatively, the voiceless affricate *c* can be designated by ڃ in initial and internal positions and by ڎ in final or independent positions.

Another peculiarity of KS is a great degree of liberty with respect to word limits. All Mandinka Ajami texts tend to agglutinate postpositions, auxiliaries and quantifiers to content words, however, KS goes much further. It is not infrequent to find entire sentences written in one word, e.g.: مَنْجُنُلُمُتَا ⟨man^{0}ǧunulumutaʾ⟩ *màani júunoolu mòota* 'the early sorts of rice ripened'.

5.1.5. *Hamlyn's Texts*

Hamlyn's texts (HM) are scarce: a chart of graphemes, a couple of sample words, and a four-line sample text. The most striking divergences of this variety from the 'major' one is the writing of *p* by an ordinary ب (instead of پ), and an introduction of the character *sing* for the palatal nasal sonant *ñ*. According to Hamlyn, *sing* ڽ is a borrowing from the Wolof Arabic-based writing tradition. In the description by Fallou Ngom (2010) of the same writing tradition, this grapheme is missing. Meanwhile, in Ngom's variety, Wolof uses a strategy for representing various consonants (*c*, *nj*, *p*, *mb*, etc.), using combinations of upper and lower diacritic dots (in particular, three upper dots) which makes the claim by Hamlyn of Wolof influence seem plausible.

Another peculiarity of Hamlyn's variety is the use of ش for the voiceless affricate *c*, which is elsewhere represented by both ج and ذ (see above) or by graphemes based on these with additional modifying dots.

Like KS, Hamlyn's text displays frequent word-final otiose length markers. In the available text, this length is always written with an *ʾalif*, whatever the preceding vocalic diacritic may be, e.g. لُكُنْتُا ⟨lukun^{0}tuʾ⟩ *lóo kùntu* 'piece of wood'.

Meanwhile, the word-final *-ŋ* may be rendered by a bare *tanwīn* (as in the major Mandinka Ajami type), or by a combination of a *nūn* with a letter representing vocalic length in Arabic, as in لُنو كِلِنا ⟨lunw kilinʾ⟩ *lúŋ kíliŋ* 'one day'.

5.2. *Bamana Ajami*

5.2.1. *Bamana Ajami from San, Beginning of the 20th Century*

For the presentation and analysis of this variety, see Dumestre & Vydrin (this volume).

5.2.2. *Bamana Ajami from Mali of the 1980–1990s*

This writing tradition is represented by short texts produced at my request by three people: Musa Kulibaly, then (during the 1980s) a student in the Leningrad State University; Seku Haydara, a middle-aged man from Bamako (1992); and Shaka Tarawele (1998), a middle-aged trader from Kolokani (his family is from Tengerela by origin).

Analysis of these texts displays a great instability of the orthography, both among different authors and within the orthographical idiolect of one author. In the following, the varieties of each author are briefly summarized.

5.2.2.1. *Musa Kulibali's Orthography*

Musa Kulibali's orthography is the most chaotic of the three. *s* is rendered indiscriminately by س ⟨s⟩, ش ⟨š⟩, or ث ⟨ṯ⟩ and *d* by د ⟨d⟩ or ض ⟨ḍ⟩. Both *k* and *g* can be transcribed by either ک ⟨k_2⟩ or ق ⟨q_1⟩. ی ⟨y_1⟩ may refer to the palatal approximant *y* or to the palatal nasal sonant *ɲ*. ه ⟨h⟩ appears in its medial variety, i.e. ﻬ, in all positions, whether initial, medial, final, or isolate and it represents both *h* and *w* as well as serving as orthographic basis for a vowel without a preceding consonant (کهُو ذُ ⟨khuw du⟩ *k'ò* [kóò] *dún* 'to eat it'). For the voiced affricate, three different graphemes are used: ج ⟨ğ⟩, ذ ⟨ḏ⟩, and خ ⟨ḫ⟩. However, ج and خ never appear in word-final or independent positions, which could possibly be another case of a merger of these graphemes, in the same way as in the Mandinka-KS variety (see above). At the same time, either خ ⟨ḫ⟩, ذ ⟨ḏ⟩, ز ⟨z⟩ can represent *z*, while ذ ⟨ḏ⟩ and ت ⟨t⟩ can both stand for the voiceless palatal affricate *c*. Naturally, ت also represents *t*. Therefore, there is a high degree of ambiguity, as each of these phonemes can be represented by two or three letters in Arabic-based script, and each of these letters in Arabic-based script refers to two or three different phonemes.

Geminated consonants are missing in the Bamana variety, which might explain *tašdīd* (which marks gemination in Arabic script as used for Arabic) being used at random in the Bamana Ajami tradition, without any obvious relation to the phonemic composition of the text.

For the seven vowels of the Bamana language, Musa Kulibali uses five vocalic diacritics: in addition to *fatḥa, ḍamma* and *kasra*, there is *sukūn*, whose function as zero-vowel marker would otherwise be void, since in Bamana there are neither word-final consonants nor sequences of consonants without a vowel in between. Furthermore, there is a newly created diacritic—a dot, which is usually placed below the letter and rarely on top, e.g. مَلِ ⟨male⟩ 'Mali'. However, these two additional markers fail to lessen ambiguity in vowel marking, because they are used in a most confusing way: *ḍamma* ◌ُ ⟨u⟩ renders all back vowels (*u, o, ɔ*); *fatḥa* ◌َ ⟨a⟩ can stand for any non-back vowel (*a, ɛ, e, i*), while *kasra* ◌ِ ⟨i⟩, *sukūn* ◌ْ ⟨^{0}⟩ and the upper/lower dot may refer to any front vowel (*i, e, ɛ*).

Nasal vowels are mostly undifferentiated from oral ones and *tanwīn fatḥa*, i.e ◌ً ⟨a^n⟩ and *tanwīn kasra*, i.e ◌ٍ ⟨i^n⟩ indicate nasalization only occasionally. Vowel length (which is relevant in Bamana, though less present than in Mandinka) is not represented at all. On the other hand, *ʾalif, yāʾ* and *wāw* are used broadly as markers of word-final otiose length, without any visible relation with the preceding vocalic diacritic, e.g. يَلْمَو ⟨yal^{0}maw⟩ *yɛlɛma* 'to transform', كَبُي ⟨kabuy$_1$⟩ *ká bòn* 'to be big'.

5.2.2.2. *Seku Haydara's Orthography*

Seku Haydara's consonant notation is much more harmonized, as far as one can judge by one short page. ک is used for both *g* and *k*, in both initial and medial position, while ق is used in Arabic loanwords (although it does not necessarily correspond to *qāf* in the original Arabic words). No emphatic letter appears in the text. ع is not to be realized in pronunciation, but serves as support for a vowel without a consonant preceding. *Ḍād* appears exclusively and constantly in the spelling of *dɔ́* 'certain'. *j* is always designated by ج, while *c, p*, the syllabic nasal, as well as prenasalized consonants are not attested in the text.

Vowels are also transcribed by Seku Haydara in a much more coherent way than in Musa Kulibaly's texts, with *fatḥa* representing *a*, and *ḍamma* representing *u, o,* and *ɔ*. As in the majority of the Manding Ajami varieties, front vowels remain underspecified and therefore ambiguous. Accordingly, *kasra* can render any of them (*i, e,* and *ɛ*); *sukūn* represents *i*. Furthermore, there is one additional vocalic diacritic representing middle vowels: a lower dot which may appear alone or in combination with any other diacritic representing a vowel, i.e. *kasra, ḍamma, fatḥa* or *sukūn*, without any obvious difference in meaning, e.g. شِنَي ⟨šinaey$_1$⟩ *sɛ̀nɛ́* 'farm work', تِي كُلِيِ ⟨tey$_1$ k$_2$ueleyey$_1$⟩ *té kélen yé* 'not the same'. In one instance, a combination of the

lower dot with *ḍamma* is used for ɔ: ضُبُوُ ⟨ḍuewu⟩ *dɔ́w* 'certain [pl.]'. Vocalic nasality remains unmarked.

5.2.2.3. *Shaka Tarawele's Orthography*

Shaka Tarawele's variety is relatively stable and close to Seku Haydara's non-use of emphatic and guttural consonants. The only possible[26] instance of *qāf* (written with two dots above following Ḥafṣ tradition!) is in the toponym تِقْرَلاَ ⟨tiq⁰ral'a⟩ *Tengerela*; in another instance, the same word is written with ک. Both voiced and voiceless palatal affricates, *j* and *c*, are rendered by ج.

No additional diacritics for vowels are introduced: *ḍamma* represents *u*, *o*, and *ɔ*, *fatḥa* represents *a*, *kasra* represents *i*, *e*, *ɛ*, and *sukūn* usually *i* and occasionally also *e*. Vocalic nasality is not marked, the only exception being the 1st pl. pronoun *án* (otherwise, it would be impossible to distinguish it from two other pronouns, 3rd sg. *à* and 2nd pl. *á*), and it is designated by a combination of *ʾalif* + *fatḥa*, i.e. أ ⟨ʾa⟩ with either *wāw* + *ḍamma*, i.e. وُ ⟨wu⟩, *wāw* + *fatḥa*, i.e. وَ ⟨wa⟩, or *wāw* + *sukūn*, i.e. وْ ⟨w⁰⟩. There is no evidence available for vowel length being differentiated.

An original innovation is employed by Shaka Tarawele for the writing of monosyllabic words: they are regularly provided with a final ع carrying a diacritical vowel marking being a reduplication of the preceding vocalic diacritic, e.g. بِعِ ⟨biʿi⟩ *bɛ́* [imperfective marker], or فَعَ ⟨f₁aʿa⟩ *fà* 'father', etc. This orthographic extension seems to have a purely decorative function.

5.3. *Bonduku Jula* (*Delafosse 1904*)

Unfortunately, Delafosse provides no texts, and a dozen words reproduced by him do not allow going beyond his chart of characters.

5.4. *Mogofin*

The only two supplementary characters for the consonants are پ, representing *p*, and ۑ, representing *ɲ* (the latter is sometimes replaced by ي). Letters representing emphatic and guttural consonants in Arabic are not used, except for *qāf* (representing *g*). It is worthwhile mentioning that in the texts written by Alhousseyni Diallo (no other Mogofin texts are available), *qāf* is written with two upper dots, i.e ق (as in the Mašriq, following Ḥafṣ)

[26] This may be rather an ع with two upper dots. It is difficult to say since the letter appears in the word-internal position.

and *fāʾ* with one lower dot, i.e. ڢ (as in the Maġrib, following Warš), which is exceptional among Manding Ajami systems (since they always follow the Maghrebi use of Warš letter forms). Presumably, this peculiarity stems from Alhousseyni's acquaintance with modern Arabic publications.[27]

Two additional diacritics representing vowels are used: a subscript dot ◌ٜ for *e, ɛ* and a *ḍamma* with a dot inside ◌ٝ for *o, ɔ*. Otiose final length markers appear frequently, and they always correspond to vocalic marking on the preceding letter. *Sukūn* indicates the absence of a vowel on the nasal sonant, which is the only consonant which can be followed by yet another consonant.

In conclusion, the Mogofin orthography stands out for its regularity and lack of ambiguity.

5.5. *Susu*

The Susu orthography, as represented in the text samples, is relatively well adapted to the specifics of the language. In addition to its features as summarized in Table 1 above, it should be added that both *ʾalif* and *ʿayn* may serve as support for a vowel without a preceding consonant. The syllabic nasal *N* (personal pronoun 1st sg.) is written as either عُ ⟨ʿu⟩ or عٌا ⟨ʿuⁿʾ⟩. The character خ represents *x*, a phoneme very frequent in Susu. *Tašdīd*, i.e. ◌ّ, is often used for no obvious reason.

The only deviation from Arabic in the vocalic notation is the introduction of a diacritic for middle front vowels (*e, ɛ*), which is a lower dot ◌ٜ. *Sukūn* indicates the lack of a vowel, just like in Arabic. Redundant final length markers are very frequent and again they correspond to the diacritics representing vowels on the preceding letters. The syllable-final nasal sonants are rendered using *tanwīn*, i.e. ◌ً ⟨aⁿ⟩, ◌ٍ ⟨iⁿ⟩, or ◌ٌ ⟨uⁿ⟩, and there is even a *tanwīn* for the lower dot diacritic.

6. Conclusion

A comparison of the characteristic features of the Ajami orthographic varieties for Mande languages reveals that they may differ greatly in their degree of codification, even within one geolinguistic area, such as the Mandinka texts of KS vs. TBII and PB, or San Bamana and Shaka Tarawele's texts

[27] Cf. Fallou Ngom's (2010) observation that in Wolofal, both *maġribī* and *mašriqī* forms of these letters can be used, "depending on the author's background".

vs. Musa Kulibali's writings. Obviously, the degree of orthographic stability should be attributed to the difference in writing styles and to individual skills, knowledge, and idiosyncratic choices of the authors. The same factors might also determine the use of letters representing emphatic and guttural consonants for transcribing Arabic loanwords.

Certain orthographic deviations from Arabic script as used for Arabic can be regarded as individual innovations by single authors. Among these we can mention the use of emphatic alveolar letters ص, ض, and ط in TBII to distinguish closed from middle vowels, the use of ش ⟨š⟩ for *s* (*š* has no phonological status in any of the languages in question, except for Bamana, where /ʃ/ is a marginal phoneme), various means for writing the voiceless affricate *c* (which has phonological status only in Bamana and Mandinka, being an allophone of /k/ or /t/ everywhere else),[28] and the word-final use of ع in monosyllabic words by Shaka Tarawele.

However, there are also orthographic features that might be regarded as diagnostic for establishing genetic affinity among the Ajami varieties. Among these I would mention:

i. ې for the palatal nasal sonant *ɲ* (*ñ*) (in Mandinka, Susu, and Mogofin)
ii. ٻ for *p* (in Mandinka (with the exception of HM), and Mogofin)
iii. ◌ٜ (lower dot) for front middle vowels (in San Bamana, modern Bamana [with variations], Susu, and Mogofin)
iv. probably also the grapheme *qāf* representing *g* (in modern Bamana, Susu, and Mogofin)

At least the first three of these orthographic features are new characters created for Mande phonemes absent from Arabic, rather than adaptations of existing Arabic letters. So, they rather look like shared innovations than coincidences.

Based on two of these orthographic features, i.e. ې for *ɲ*, and ٻ for *p*, Mandinka, Mogofin and Susu, which could be referred to as 'Western', or 'Coastal' Manding Ajami varieties, constitute one area. Based on the other features, i.e. the lower dot representing front middle vowels, and *qāf* representing *g*, Mogofin and Susu can be grouped together with Bamana. Both features are also found in the Ajami orthographic tradition of Pular in Fuuta Jalon (Koval & Zubko 1986: 27–30), and it is reasonable to consider

28 I consider the use of غ to represent *g* in the Bonduku orthographic system as well as in KS Mandinka (where it occurs only very marginally) to be a mere coincidence.

them common 'isoglosses' of the other Ajami orthographic area comprising Mogofin, Susu, Fuuta Jalon Pulaar, and Bamana, which could be termed 'Southeastern'.[29] Both of the more recent Ajami systems, Mogofin and Susu, are at the intersection of both areas, which may reflect the role of both the Fulbe as vectors of a militant Islamization through jihad, and the Jakhanke, Muslim clerics and traders, as vectors of a peaceful Islamization.

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[29] Another common feature shared between San Bamana and Pulaar Ajami orthographic systems is the inverted *ḍamma* for the writing of back middle vowels (*o, ɔ*).

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Appendix 1: Table of Phoneme Correspondences

Transcription	IPA equivalent
c	/t͡ʃ/
ñ	/ɲ/
j	/d͡ʒ/
p	/p/
kp	/k͡p/
gb	/g͡b/
g	/g/
s	/s/
ɲ	/ɲ/
ŋ	/ŋ/
l	/l/
w	/w/
e	/e/
ɛ	/ɛ/
i	/i/
o	/o/
ɔ	/ɔ/
u	/u/

MANDING AJAMI SAMPLES: MANDINKA AND BAMANA*

Valentin Vydrin and Gérard Dumestre

1. Introduction

The Manding Ajami writing tradition is much less mysterious today than it was thirty or forty years ago, when scholarly literature would settle for mentioning it in passing, and practically no single authentic text was available. However, the number of texts published still remains extremely low and they reflect poorly on the geographical spread of this writing system. We are still at the stage where every new text introduced into scholarly circulation is a discovery: with a high degree of probability, it represents either a new variety of the writing, a new literary genre, or even establishes the use in a new geographical area where the existence of Ajami was hitherto unknown. The texts presented here exemplify this situation.

In the following, texts of the manuscripts will be represented in four columns: the source texts in Manding Ajami, i.e. Arabic-based orthography, a Roman script transliteration, a Roman script standard transcription, and an English translation.

In the transliteration, we tried our best to remain true to the Ajami text. We had to interpret spellings in order to segment texts into words, whenever Arabic-(based) graphemes are written disconnected to the left. This applies to the letters *ʾalif, dāl, ḏāl, rāʾ, zāy, wāw*, which are always spelt disconnected from the following letters in Arabic script. Therefore, it is most often impossible to judge whether a word boundary was intended by the author of the manuscript after such a letter or not. In the standard transcription, Bamana text is represented following the official orthography of the Bamana language, while dialectal forms are being eliminated.[1] We

* This work is related to the research strand 6 “Language resources” of the Labex EFL (financed by the AVR/CGI). The authors would like to thank Charles Riley who volunteered to correct the English texts.

[1] The Ajami writing reflects a dialectal form, different from the Standard Bamana one.

suppose that they can be easily restored from the transliteration. Although tones are not marked in Arabic-based script, lexical tones are marked in the standard transcription, while contextual and grammatical tonal changes (among them, the tonal article[2]) are ignored.

The Mandinka document is a sample of a magical text containing hunting incantations. Unlike all the other authentic documents published so far, it is authored, most probably, by an ordinary Muslim, rather than a Muslim cleric, for hunting remains a domain far remote from the sphere of pious marabouts. ʾAllāh and Muḥammad are nevertheless mentioned in these texts, and Arabic words are inserted here and there, possibly for extra effectiveness, e.g. تَمَالِ ⟨tamaʾli⟩ *tamaali* (3: 3, 3: 4),[3] and probably also فَلَق ⟨$q_1$alaq_1a⟩ *kalaka* (2: 2). In essence, though, the religious core of this text is quite animist.

The other set of texts is the very first sample of the authentic Bamana writing tradition published.[4] They come from San, an ancient commercial center in the southwestern part of Mali, and may well represent the earliest piece ever of authentic Bamana literature.

In the following, the texts are reproduced in digitalized form, provided with an exact Roman script transliteration, a normalized transcription (with tones in Mandinka texts following Creissels et al. 1982), and an English translation including comments. Each text is followed by an analysis of the peculiarities of the Ajami variety.

2. Mandinka Hunter's Incantations

The incantations were shown to Valentin Vydrin by Abdulay Daafee, who was his host in the Samakun village (Sédhiou region, Senegal) in October 2007. His oral comments were very helpful in decoding and transliterating

[2] In Bamana, a definite article is represented by a floating low tone following a noun or a noun group. In current transcription practice, it is rarely marked even in texts with tonal notation.

[3] In referencing the texts, the first number (preceding the colon) represents the number of the text, and the second one (following the colon) represents the line. For the Bamana two-page texts, the figure preceding a slash represents the number of the text, while the second figure (following the slash) represents the page number, and the third figure, following the colon, represents the line.

[4] The only Bamana texts published so far (Vydrine 1998) were written at the request of Valentin Vydrin. Therefore, they may be regarded as evidence for the study of the orthographic tradition of Bamana Ajami, but they do not exemplify its genres.

of the texts. However, certain passages (given in italics in the Roman transcription) remain obscure, and their transliteration and translation remain, therefore, tentative. In particular, personal pronouns of the 2nd pers sg. *í* and the 3rd pers pl. *ì* differ only in tone, the context usually being insufficient to opt for one or the other interpretation. In such cases, decisions were taken more or less at random.

Each incantation begins with an Islamic preamble, followed by magic formulae, which sometimes consist of words that are non-existent in Mandinka language (at least, they are absent from Mandinka dictionaries and are not recognized by Mandinka speakers as true words). At the end, the objects and substances are mentioned (apparently, those which are necessary for the magic action), followed by the Arabic word اسمه *ismuhu* 'his name'.

Text 1

	Transliteration	Transcription	Translation
بسمِ الله	bsmi 'llh	1. Bismi llahi	1. By the name of God
سَلَعَلِ مُحَمَّدِ وَالَعلِى مُحَمَّدِ ع نَرِ	sala'ali muḥam^{2}adi wa'la'liy$_1$ muḥam^{2}adi ' nari	2. Salaʕa li Muhammadi wa l'ʕali Muhammadi. í nari!	2. Greetings to Muḥammad and the Highest Muḥammad. Stop!
شُبُ نَرِ مِنً كَپَ كُتُ تُ٘بُ بِا عِ كُ٘تُ	šubu nari mina^n kay$_2$a kutu tu^{n}bu bi' 'i ku^{n}tu	3. Sùboo nari! Mìnankaña kòto *túnbuŋ* bé í kùntu	3. Animal, stop! Old male antelope, ruins will cut you [?].
تُ٘بُ تٍكُنُ ڢَاكُ٘دَمَا بَاكُ٘دَمَا	tu^{n}bu ti^{n}kun$_1$u f$_1$a'ku^{n}dama' ba'ku^{n}dama'	4. *túnbuŋ* t'í *kùnuŋ*, faakundamaa baakundamaa.	4. Ruins won't swallow you, *faakundamaa, baakundamaa*.
عِ پَشُبُ عِ تًدِنَا ع سَڢَا عِ پَا	'i y$_2$ašubu 'i ta^{n}dina' ' saf$_1$a' 'i y$_2$a'	5. *í* ñáa sùboo, *ì* tàa, díina [jínna?], *ì* s'à fàa *í* ñáa.	5. Animal is before your eyes, take them, bush spirit, they will kill it before you.
شُبُ كِپَتَدِنَا ء سَڢَا عِ پَا	šubu kiy$_2$itadina' ? saf$_1$a' 'i y$_2$a'	6. Sùboo kèeñeeta, díina [jínna?], ń s'à fàa *í* ñáa.	6. The animal has fallen asleep, bush spirit, I will kill it before you.

	Transliteration	Transcription	Translation
شُبُ مُسُ عِتَّدِ ء نَا ء سَبَا تت	šubu musu ‘ita^{n}di ʔ na’ ʔ saf$_{1}$a’ tt	7. Sùbu musoo yìtandi ń ná, ń s’à fàa *tata*	7. Show me a female animal, I’ll kill it.
تِايُو عَنٍ مِنًا كَيِ تِيُو نِا بُنْبً سُلُ	ti’yuw ‘ani^{n} mina^{n}’ kaya tiyuw ni^{n}’ bu^{n}ba^{n} sulu	8. Tío àníŋ mìnankaña, tío níŋ bumbaŋ súloo	8. Hair and male antelope, hair and the root of *bumbaŋ*.
اسمه مَن كَرَ بِنَمُ سُلَوُلٍ	’smh man$_{1}$ kara binamu sulawuli^{n}	9. Ismahu mànkara bína mú sùla wùleŋ.	9. Its name is the horn of the *mànkara* antelope, red monkey.

Comments

Line 1. The first spelling could be read as خسبِى ⟨ḫsbiy$_{1}$⟩. However, such a reading hardly makes any sense. Most probably, it is an ordinary *basmala* (بسم ⟨bsm⟩) written in a fanciful way.

Line 2. Apparently سَلَعَلِ ⟨sala‘ali⟩ *sala’ali* is a modified form of صلّى لِ ⟨ṣl^{2}y$_{1}$ l-i⟩ which might be an abbreviated version of the Arabic formula صلّى الله عليه وسلّم *ṣallā llāhu ‘alayhi wa-sallam* ‘May God bless him and grant him peace’. In the second and third incantation, it is spelled as سَلَلِ ⟨salali⟩.

The word *nari* is absent from all available Mandinka dictionaries. The translation ‘stop!’ was suggested by Abdulay Daafee.

Line 3. *Koto* may be also interpreted as another word for ‘male’ (it usually appears in compounds *bàakoto* ‘he-goat’, *sàakoto* ‘ram’).

Line 4. *Faakundamaa, baakundamaa* are ideophones depicting the antelope’s walk.

Lines 5, 6. *jínna* ‘bush spirit’ is a reading suggested by Abdulay Daafee. The literal reading *díina* ‘religion’ does not fit the context.

Line 6. *kèeñee* is a word from the respectful vocabulary[5] for ‘to sleep’.

Line 7. The final element of the line is transcribed here as *tata*. In fact, it might be a decorative element indicating the end of the magic formula. Cf. a similar element at the end of the San Bamana text 5.

Lines 8 and 9. It seems to be an enumeration of ingredients for the fabrication of a fetish or amulet. It looks like they were written post factum, in the blank space, and line 9 was fitted into the left margin of the page.

Line 9. *mànkara* or *mànkari* is an unidentified species of antelope.

[5] A special register used for expressing respect. For more information, see Vydrin (2008).

Text 2

	Transliteration	Transcription	Translation
سَلَلِ مُحَمَّدِ وَالَعَلِى مُحَمَّدِ ذِبِاذِبِ	salali muḥam^{2}adi wa’la‘aliy$_1$ muḥam^{2}adi ḏi^{n}bi^{n}’ḏi^{n}bi^n	1. Salali Muhammadi wa-l-ʕalii Muhammadi. Jimbiŋ jimbiŋ.	1. Greetings to Muḥammad and the Highest Muḥammad. *Jimbiŋ jimbiŋ*.
جِبِ فَلَقَ فَلَقَ جِبِ	ğ̆i^{n}bi^n q$_1$alaq$_1$a q$_1$alaq$_1$a ğ̆i^{n}bi^n	2. Jimbiŋ kalaka kalaka jimbiŋ.	2. *Jimbiŋ kalaka kalaka jimbiŋ*.
مِنً كَيَ كُتُ جِبِ نِتِعَلَ	mina^n kaya kutu ğ̆i^{n}bi^n niti‘ala	3. Mìnaŋ kaña kòto jinbiŋ n’í té à lá	3. Old male antelope, *jimbiŋ*. If you don’t sing this,
كُدَسِ اسمه كَسَلَ ذَبَمُ	kudasi ’smh kasala ḏa^{n}bamu	4. kùdasi. Ismuhu kásalaa jàmba mú.	4. be puny. Its name is the leaf of the *kasalaa* grass.

Comments

Lines 1–2. *Jimbiŋ kalaka kalaka jimbiŋ* is a magic formula. There is a Mandinka word *jìmbi* ‘a headgear with fringes’, but it hardly fits this context. *Kalaka* is not a Mandinka word, but might possibly be related to *qalaq* ‘anxiety, insomnia [Arabic]’.

Line 4. *Kùdasi* is a verb meaning ‘to remain underdeveloped’, ‘to fail to reach normal size’ (absent from Creissles et al. 1982).

Kásalaa is an unidentified type of grass, also known as *kàcancároo*.

Abdulay Daafee commented: *Í s’à buru jàŋ* ‘[After the incantation is pronounced,] you should rub it’.

Text 3

	Transliteration	Transcription	Translation
سَلَلِ مُحَمَّدِ وَالَعَلِى مُحَمَّدِ	salali muḥam^{2}adi wa’la‘aliy^1 muḥam^{2}adi	1. Salali Muhammadi wa-l-ʕali: Muhammadi.	1. Greetings to Muḥammad and the Highest Muḥammad.
دَجِ دَجِ وَرِكً وَرِكً كُنًتُ	daği^n daği^n warika^n warika^n ku^{n}tu^n	2. Dajiŋ dajiŋ warikaŋ warikaŋ kuntuŋ,	2. Cut *dajiŋ dajiŋ warikaŋ warikaŋ*,
تَمَالِ سَكَتً تَمَالِ فَبِ	tama’li sakata^n tama’li f$_1$abi	3. tamaali sákatùŋ tamaali fàa bìi.	3. always, that is, always, to kill today.

	Transliteration	Transcription	Translation
تَمَالِ فُبِ عَبَدًا تت	tama’li f₁ubi ‘abada^{n}’ tt	4. Tamaali fó bìi ábadaŋ.	4. Always, up to this day, forever.
اسِمِه كِسِ مُسُ رً مُ	ʔsmih kisi musu ra^{n} mu	5. Ismihu kèse mósoraŋ mú.	5. Its name is an incantation for a rubber bullet.

Comments

Line 2. *dajiŋ dajiŋ warikaŋ warikaŋ* are magic formulae—These are not Mandinka words.

Lines 3, 4. تَمَالِ ⟨tama’li⟩ *tamaali* is certainly Arabic *tamalli* ‘always’ (this word is absent from everyday Mandinka).

Line 3. سَكَتً ⟨sakatan⟩ *sakatan* was read by Abdulay Daafee as *sókotùŋ* ‘that is’. Cf. in Creissels et al. (1982) *sàko, sòko* ‘surtout, encore plus, à plus forte raison’.

Line 5. *Mósoraŋ* is an instrument name from the verb *móso* ‘to rub while spitting and pronouncing incantations’. This line denotes the destination of the incantation.

3. Grammatological Remarks to the Mandinka Hunters’ Incantations

Because of the spelling of the palatal nasal sonant *ɲ*,[6] these texts would belong to the main Mandinka Ajami variety (cf. Vydrin, this volume): *ɲ* ⟨*ñ*⟩ is represented by ي. Further grammatological characteristics of this document are:

- *-s* is usually written as *sīn*, except for one case where it is written as *šīn*, i.e. شُبُ | ⟨šubu⟩ *sùbu* ‘animal, meat’.
- *-j* (a voiced palatal affricate) is spelled as eiher ذ or ج, with the latter appearing both word-initially and word-finally.[7]
- ع is used as support for any diacritic expressing a vowel, when it is not preceded by a consonant. Furthermore, it also is used for spelling of the palatal oral sonant *y*, although there is only one occurrence in the text, i.e. عِتَنْدِ ⟨‘ita^{n}di⟩ *yìtandi* (1: 7) ‘to show’.

[6] In the text, there is not a single word containing a *p*, which makes the other diagnostic criterion (see Vydrin, present volume) inapplicable.

[7] In one word *j* is probably written using *dāl*, دِنَا ⟨dina’⟩ (incantation 1, lines 5 and 6). However, we are not sure about the interpretation of this word.

– The nasal syllabic phoneme *ŋ* (which appears in Mandinka in only two words: *ŋ́* 'I', *ŋ̀* 'we') is written as *hamza*, i.e. ء- (which could also be an *ʿayn*, i.e. ع) without any support or vocalic diacritics.
– Letters representing emphatics in the orthography of Arabic are not used, with the exception of the rather obscure word فَلَڧ ⟨$q_1$alaq_1a⟩ (2: 2).
– *Nūn, qāf* and *fāʾ* are written in the *maġribī* way: in word-final positions, *nūn* has normally (with only one exception) no dot, while *qāf* is always spelled with one dot above, i.e. ڧ, and *fāʾ* always with one dot below, i.e. ڢ.
– Only the three standard vocalic diacritics, i.e. َ, ِ, and ُ, are used and there are no attempts to differentiate closed and mid vowels.
– *ʾAlif*, *wāw*, and *yāʾ* do not indicate in any way length of vowels. These letters appear mainly at the end of words, sometimes in disagreement with the preceding vocalic diacritic, and always without any visible correlation to vowel length, e.g. بِا *bé* 'imperfective marker'. However, such 'fake length' is much less frequent than in some other Mandinka Ajami texts.
– The syllable-final nasal element is usually rendered by *tanwīn*, e.g. سُلَوُلٍ ⟨sulawuli^n⟩ *sùla wùleŋ* 'red monkey' (1: 9), and rarely by *nūn*, as in مَں كَرَ ⟨man_1 kara⟩ *mànkara* 'species of antelope' (1: 9).

4. Bamana Texts from San

In 1972, during one of his sojourns in Mali, Gérard Dumestre dispatched a friend of his, Almamy Malik Yattara, to the ancient commercial town of San to look for old Bamana manuscripts. Almamy Yattara was a remarkable representative of the Muslim intelligentsia of Mali, and two books were dedicated to him (Yattara & Salvaing 2000, 2003). Being a Muslim cleric, it was much easier for him than for a White man to gain the confidence of his coreligionists. A couple of weeks later, Almamy Yattara returned to Bamako with copies of five manuscripts: Bory Bary, the head of one of the Islamic families of San, allowed him (for a modest recompense) to copy by hand texts that had originally been written by Bary's father, Amadu Bary, in 1911.

Being literate in French, Almamy Yattara provided each manuscript with a brief comment, which proved, however, difficult to understand at times. These comments are reproduced here in an English translation, while the French originals are given in footnotes in the author's own orthography.

There is also a comment written by Almamy Yattara referring to the entire set of the documents:

> The length of this sheet is equal to the origin. I have written them from a white paper, the characters are equal. The gift for these five documents was 6,000 Malian Francs, for I gave 3,000 Francs for two initial ones, when I saw that I was too tough, and I did it in order to have more, if any. And for the other three manuscripts I gave 3,000 Franc. It is the time of working the farm. Nobody has time. By Almamy Yattara.[8]

Today, 39 years after the manuscripts were copied by Almamy Yattara and exactly 100 years after they were created, we proceed to their publication.

Text 1

Almamy Yattara's comment:

> The possessor of the document "Karantela Kolomba, the sacred well of San", Bory Bary. Written by his father in Arabic characters in San for him in 1911. The copyist Almamy Malik Yattara in San in 1972.[9]

	Transliteration	Transcription	Translation
Page 1			
كَرَنْتَلَ كُلُمْبَا. دُكُ بِيَا سُرُ يَنْ	karan^{0}tela ku$_1$lu$_1$m^{0}baʾ. duk$_4$-u beyaʾ su$_1$ru$_1$ yan$_1$^{0}	1. Karantɛla kòlɔnba. Dùgu bɛ́ɛ y'à sɔ̀rɔ yàn	1. Big well of Karantela. When the entire village found it here,
تُمَمِنْ. دُكُ سِكِرَ كَكُلُنْ سُرُ يَنْ	tumamin$_1$^{0}. duk$_4$-u sik$_4$ira kaku$_1$lu$_1$n$_1$^{0} su$_1$ru$_1$ yan$_1$^{0}	2. tùma mín, dùgu sìgira kà kòlɔn sɔ̀rɔ yàn.	2. when the village was founded the well was here.
مَا كُرُوْ يَا فُ أو پِي كُ كُلُنْ تَنَى دِ پِي نِفُلَوْ نَانَ	maʾ ku$_1$ru$_1$w^0 yaʾ f$_1$o ʾʔw yey$_1$ ku$_1$-ku$_1$lu$_1$n$_1$^{0} tanay$_1$ de yey$_1$ nif$_1$ulaw^0 naʾna	3. Màa kɔ̀rɔw y'à fɔ́ ánw yé kó kòlɔn tàna dè yé ní fúlaw nàna,	3. Old people told us that the taboo of the well is: if Fulbe come,

[8] The original text:
les longere de sette feille et egal de loriginal. je les estrié de papié Bilansse le karactere et egalla le cado de cet 5 dockimen. eté 6,000 faran. pissique les 2 prumier je done 3,000 F lorssque jevi jessi tro diure et je fai sa pour avar encor si yana. et avec le 3 maniscri—lotre je done 3,000 F. ya le travaus de samnp. toule monde nonpa de tan. par Almamy Yattara.

[9] The original text:
le détentéer de docimen Karantéla Kolomba le piu sacré de- san. Bory Bary ecri par son pere an karactere- arabe a san pour loui, en 1911 a san. le copisste Almamy malick Yattara a san en 1972.

	Transliteration	Transcription	Translation
أُكَنَا يِي كَا لَجِى. بر نِفُلَوْ يَا لَجِى أَ بُفِيِى	’ʔu kana’ yey$_1$ ka’ lağey$_1$. br nif$_1$ulaw^0 yå’ lağey$_1$ ’ʔa buf$_1$iyey$_1$	4. ù kàn’à yé k’à lájɛ́. Bàri ní fúlaw y’à lájɛ́ à b’ù fíyen	4. they should not see it. But if Fulbe see it, it will blind them,
نَا كُنَادِيرَى نِو تِى. أَ تِكِ بِسَا نَأَ مَسَا	na’ kuna’diyray$_1$ niw tey$_1$. ’ʔa tik$_4$-i bisa’ na’ʔ masa’	5. n’à kùnnadíyara, n’ò tɛ́, à tìgi bɛ́ sà. Ní à má sà,	5. if they are lucky, otherwise, they will die. If he does not die,
أَ بِفِيِى. كَرَنْتِلَ كُلُمْبَا تُلُنْكِ بِكِ أ دَ لَ	’ʔa bif$_1$iyey$_1$. karan^{0}tela ku$_1$lu$_1$m^{0}ba’ tu$_1$lu$_1$n^{0}k-e bik-e ’ʔ da la	6. à bɛ́ fíyen. Karantɛla kɔ̀lɔnba, túlonkɛ bɛ́ kɛ́ à dálá	6. he will become blind. Plays are organized near the big well Karantela
سَنُوُوُ سَنْ. نِمُنِكِ تُمَ بسرَى مَوْ بِتَا مُنِكِ	san^{0}wu$_1$wu$_1$ san$_1^0$. nimu$_1$nik-e tuma seray$_1$ maw^0 bita’ mu$_1$nik-e	7. sàn ó sàn. Ní mɔ́nnikɛtuma séra, màaw bɛ́ táa mɔ́nni kɛ́	7. every year. When the time of fishing comes, people go to fish
كُو لَ. كُو. مِينْ تُكُ كُ سَنْكِيرِى	ku$_1$w la. ku$_1$w. miyn$_1^0$ tu$_1$k$_4$-u$_1$ k-u$_1$ san^{0}keyrey$_1$	8. kɔ̀ lá. Kɔ̀ mín tɔ́gɔ kó Sankeeree.	8. to the river. The river whose name is Sankere.
نِتُلُنْكِ مَكِ أَ دَلَ جِكِ تِسُرُ أُ بِفُلُ	nitulu$_1$n^{0}k-e mak-e ’ʔa dala ğek$_4$-e tesu$_1$ru$_1$ ’ʔu bif$_1$u$_1$lu$_1$	9. Ní túlonkɛ má kɛ́ à dálá, jɛ́gɛ tɛ́ sɔ̀rɔ. Ù bɛ́ fɔ́lɔ	9. If games are not played near it, there will be no fish. First,
كَتُلُنكِ كِى فُلُ كُلُنْ دَ لَ. كَسُرُ كَا كِيِيَا	katulu$_1$nk$_4$-e key$_1$ f$_1$u$_1$lu$_1$ ku$_1$lu$_1$n$_1^0$ da la. kasu$_1$ru$_1$ ka’ k$_4$iyeya’	10. kà túlonkɛ kɛ́ fɔ́lɔ kɔ̀lɔn dálá, kà sɔ̀rɔ kà jànya	10. they play near the well, then they move away
وُ كُفِى مُنِكِبَوْ بِجِكِ سَنْكِير لَ وُ تُمَ تُلُنْكِ	wu$_1$ ku$_1$f$_1$ey$_1$ mu$_1$nik$_4$ebaw^0 biğik$_4$-i san^{0}keyre la wu$_1$ tuma tulu$_1$n^{0}k$_4$-e	11. wò kɔ́fɛ̀ mɔ́nnikɛbaaw bɛ́ jìgin Sankeere la. Wò tùma túlonkɛ	11. then the fishers descend to Sankere. At that time the game
مِنْكِيرَ يِنْ أى كُلُنْ دَ لَ. وُ يُكُنْ بِكِ مُنِكِى يُرُ لَ.	min^{0}keyra yen$_1^0$ ’ʔy$_1$ ku$_1$lu$_1$n$_1^0$ da la. wu$_1$ y$_3$u$_1$k$_4$u$_1$n$_1^0$ bik-e mu$_1$nikey$_1$ yu$_1$ru$_1$ la.	12. mín kɛ́ra yèn *à yé* [?] kɔ̀lɔn dálá. Wò ɲɔ̀gɔn bɛ́ kɛ́ mɔ́nnikɛyɔrɔ lá.	12. that is played there [...?] near the well. The same thing is done at the fishing place,

	Transliteration	Transcription	Translation
سَنْكِير لَ.وْ يِ سَنْوُوْ سَنْ. نِدُكُ مَا بِلَ سُمَى بِيِى	san^{0}key$_{1}$r la. wu$_{1}$ yey$_{1}$ san^{0}wu$_{1}$wu$_{1}$ san$_{1}$. niduk$_{4}$-u ma' bila sumay$_{1}$ by$_{3}$ey$_{1}$	13. Sankeere la. Wò yé sàn ó sàn. Ní dùgu m'à bìla, sùman bɛ́ ɲɛ̀,	13. near Sankere. It happens every year. If the village does not abandon it [the rite], food will be abundant,
سُرُ بِكِ سِنِ لَ.هِيرِى بِتَا يَا. نِدُكُ يَا بِلَ سُمَن	su$_{1}$ru$_{1}$ bik-e sene la. heyrey$_{1}$ bita' ya'. niduk$_{4}$-u ya' bila suman$_{1}$-	14. sɔ̀rɔ bɛ́ kɛ́ sɛ̀nɛ lá, hɛ́rɛ bɛ́ táa ɲá. Ní dùgu y'à bìla, sùman	14. the harvest will be good, the peace will advance. If the village abandons it, food
بكِلِيَا بَنَا بِتَا يَا كِلِبِكِ جَمَنَا كُنُ مَسَاوْ	bk$_{4}$leya' bana' bita' ya' kelebik-e ǧamana' ku$_{1}$nu$_{1}$ masa'w^{0}	15. bɛ́ gɛ̀lɛya, bàna bɛ́ táa ɲá, kɛ̀lɛ bɛ́ kɛ́ jàmana kɔ́nɔ, màsaw	15. will be scarce, diseases will get ahead, there will be a war in the country, rulers
بِسَا دِمِسَّوْ بِبَنَا تَسُمَا بِتِيِلِكِ يُرُوْ لَ	bisa' dimis^{2}aw^{0} bibana' tasuma' bity$_{3}$lik-e yu$_{1}$ru$_{1}$w^{0} la	16. bɛ́ sà, dénmisɛnw bɛ́ bàna, tásuma bɛ́ tíɲɛli kɛ́ yɔ́rɔw lá.	16. will die, children will fall ill, fire will wreak havoc.
Page 2			
كُلُنْ دُكُلُوْ دِ بَا دُ.دُنَوْ تَا يُرُ دُنْ	ku$_{1}$lu$_{1}$n$_{1}$^{0} duk$_{4}$ulew^{0} de b' du$_{1}$. dunaw^{0} t' yu$_{1}$ru$_{1}$ du$_{1}$n$_{1}$^{0}	1. Kɔ̀lɔn, dùgulenw dè b'à dɔ́n. Dúnanw t'à yɔ́rɔ dɔ́n,	1. Natives know the well. Foreigners don't know its whereabouts,
فُو دُكُلُوْ.دُكُلُوْ يِتَرَوُرُوْ يِ تِيرَوْ يِمُرِوْ يِ	f$_{1}$u$_{1}$w duk$_{4}$ulew^{0}. duk$_{4}$ulew^{0} yetarawu$_{1}$rew^{0} yey$_{1}$ tey^{a}raw^{0} yemu$_{1}$riw^{0} yey$_{1}$	2. fóo dugulenw. Dùgulenw ye Taraworew yé, Teeraw yé móriw yé.	2. only natives do. Natives are Traore, and Tera are Muslims.
نِدِوْ وُلُلَا تَرَوُرُوْ لَ.أُ بِتَا نَا يِيِنْ كَا فُ كُلُنْ يِ	nidew^{0} wu$_{1}$lu$_{1}$l'a tarawu$_{1}$rew^{0} la. 'ʔu bita' na' yeyen$_{1}$^{0} ka' f$_{1}$u$_{1}$ ku$_{1}$lu$_{1}$n$_{1}$^{0} yey$_{1}$	3. Ní dénw wólola Taraworew lá, ù bɛ́ táa n'à yé yèn k'à fɔ́ kɔ̀lɔn yé	3. When Traore children are born, they bring the child there and say to the well:

	Transliteration	Transcription	Translation
كَرَنْتَلَ كُلُمْبَا أَ نِسُ إِ دِ ۑ دُكُلَنْۑ إِ دِ ۑ دُنَوْ	karan^{0}tela ku$_1$lu$_1$m^{0}ba’ ’ʔa nisu ’ʔ$_i$e de yey$_1$ duk$_4$ulen^{0}yey$_1$ ’ʔ$_i$e de yey$_1$ dunaw^0	4. “Karantɛla kɔ̀lɔnba, á ní sú! É dè yé dùgulen yé, é dè yé dúnanw	4. “Karantela, the Big Well, good evening! You are the native, it is you
جَتِكِۑ دُنَنْ سُرُلَ. دُنَن مُسُّـ نَانَ. وَلِمَا دِنْتِ نَانَ.	ğatik$_4$iyey$_1$ dunan$_1$^{0} su$_1$ru$_1$la. dunan$_1$ mus-^{2}u na’na. walima’ den^{0}te na’na	5. jàtigi yé, dúnan sɔ̀rɔla. Dúnanmuso nàna, wálima déncɛ nàna”.	5. who hosts strangers, there is a stranger. A foreign woman has come, or a man has come”.
أُ بَا كُلُنْكُلُ كُلُنْ دَا لَ سِۑ سَبَا تِلِبِفِى أَنِكُرُنْفِى	’ʔu ba’ kulu$_1$n^{0}k$_4$uelu$_1$ ku$_1$lu$_1$n$_1$^{0} da’ la siyey$_1$ saba’ tilebif$_1$ey$_1$ ’ʔaniku$_1$ru$_1$n^{0}f$_1$ey$_1$	6. Ù b’à kòlonkolon kɔ̀lɔn dálá sìɲɛ sàba tìlebin fɛ̀ àní kɔ́rɔn fɛ̀,	6. They roll the child near the well thrice on the western side and on the eastern side,
بَا فَ أَنِ. وُرُدُكُـ.أُ بِلَبَنْ. كَدِوْ بِلَ كُرَى كَسِكِنَا ۑ	ba’ f$_1$a ’ʔani. wu$_1$ru$_1$duk$_4$-u. ’ʔu bilaban$_1$^{0}. kadew^0 bila ku$_1$ray$_1$ kasek$_4$ina’ yey$_1$	7. bá fàn àní wòrodugu. Ù bɛ́ lábán kà dénw bìla kɔ́ lá kà sègin n’à yé	7. in the north and in the south. When they finish, they put the child on their back and bring him back
سُكُنُ نِدِنْكُودِ سِرَى كُلُنْ نِيُرُ بِبُ سُكُلَ	su$_1$ku$_1$n$_1$u$_1$ niden^{0}kuwdi seray$_1$ kulu$_1$n$_1$^{0} niyu$_1$ru$_1$ bibu$_1$ su$_1$k$_4$u$_1$la	8. só kɔ́nɔ. Ní dén kùndi séra, kɔ̀lɔn níyɔrɔ bɛ́ bɔ́ sògo lá	8. home. When the time of baptism comes, a share of the well is taken from the meat
نِوُرُ لَ نِدِكِـ كُرُ سَبَ وُ بِدِ كُلُنَّا سُفِى دُكُـ لِلَا	niwu$_1$ru$_1$ la nidek$_4$-e kuru saba wu$_1$ bedi ku$_1$lu$_1$n^{2}a’ suf$_1$ey$_1$ du$_1$k$_4$-u$_1$ lil’a	9. ní wòro lá ní dègɛ kùru sàba, wò bɛ́ dí kɔ̀lɔn ná sú fɛ̀ dògoli lá	9. and from the cola nuts, and three lumps of dough, this is given to the well by night secretly
مَا تِبِنِمَا ۑ دُكُـ تِلَمَا فِى وُتُمَى. أَ بَانَ.	ma’ tibenima’ yey$_1$ duk$_4$-u tilama’ f$_1$ey$_1$ wu$_1$tumay$_1$. ’ʔa ba’n$_1$a.	10. màa té bɛ̀n ní màa yé dùgutilama fɛ̀, wò tùma. À bánna.	10. by midnight, at the time when one meets nobody. It is the end.

Text 2

Almamy Yattara's comment:

> The possessor of the document "Janaba koli" is the same Bory Bary, inherited from his father who wrote (it) in order to teach religion to the Bamana people. The copyist Almamy Malik Yattara.[10]

	Transliteration	Transcription	Translation
نِنْپِي جناب كوِلِپِي	nin^{0}yey$_1$ ğnʾb kwliyey$_1$	1. Nìn yé jànaba kòli yé.	1. These are the ablutions.
جَنَابَ كُولِ بِكـ أَ بِكـ نِ جِي سَنِيَالِنپِي إِ بِفُلْ كَ	ğanaʾba ku$_1$wli bik$_4$-e ʾʔa bik-e ni ğiy sanyaʾlenyey$_1$ ʾʔ$_i$i bif$_1$u$_1$lu$_1$ k-a	2. Jànaba kòli bɛ́ kɛ́, à bɛ́ kɛ́ ní jí sániyalen yé. Í bɛ́ fɔ́lɔ kà	2. The ablutions are performed with clean water. First of all,
إِ كُرُلَ كُو كَا إِ تكـ فِلَ كُو كَا إِ دا مُكُرِ	ʾʔ$_i$i ku$_1$ru$_1$la ku$_1$w kaʾ ʾʔ$_i$i tek-e f$_1$ila ku$_1$w kaʾ ʾʔ$_i$i dʾ muk$_4$uri	3. í kɔ́rɔla kò kà í tɛ́gɛ fìla kò kà í dá múguri	3. wash your lower parts and both your hands, rinse your mouth,
كَا إِ نُنْ كُو كِـ إِ يِدَا كُو كِـ إِ بُلْ	kaʾ ʾʔ$_i$i nun$_1$^{0} ku$_1$w k-i ʾʔ$_i$i y$_4$edaʾ ku$_1$w k-i ʾʔ$_i$i bu$_1$lu$_1$	4. kà í nún kò k'í ɲɛ́da kò k'í bólo	4. wash your nose, wash your face, wash both of your
فِلَ كُو كِـ إِ كُنْكُلْ مَسَا كِـ إِ تُلْ مَسَا	f$_1$ila ku$_1$w k-i ʾʔ$_i$i kun^{0}k$_4$u$_1$lu$_1$ masaʾ k-i ʾʔ$_i$i tulu$_1$ masaʾ	5. fìla kò k'í kùnkolo màsá[11] k'í túlo màsá	5. hands, scrape your head and your ears,
كِـ إِ سِنْ كُو وُ تُمَ إِ بِنَا كُولِ دمِنِ	k-i ʾʔ$_i$i sen$_1$^{0} ku$_1$w wu$_1$ tuma ʾʔ$_i$i binaʾ ku$_1$wli dmine	6. k'í sèn kò. Wò tùma í bɛ́nà kòli dámìnɛ.	6. wash your feet. Then begin your ablutions.
إِ بِفُلْ نِكُنْكُلْپِي كَا كُو سِپِي سَبَ	ʾʔ$_i$i bif$_1$u$_1$lu$_1$ ni kun^{0}k$_4$ulu$_1$yey$_1$ kaʾ kuw siy$_4$ey$_1$ saba	7. Í bɛ́ fɔ́lɔ ní kùnkolo yé k'à kò sìɲɛ sàba	7. Start with your head and wash it thrice,
كِـ إِ فَنْكِلِ كُو كِنِي بُلُفِي كَا نُمَبُلْ	k-a ʾʔ$_i$i f$_1$an^{0}kele ku$_1$w kiniy$_1$ bulu$_1$f$_1$ey$_1$ kaʾ numabu$_1$lu$_1$	8. k'í fàn kélen kò kínibolo fɛ̀, kà númabolo	8. wash one side with your right hand, wash your left

[10] The original text:
le detantere de docimen de janaba koli le meme Bory Bary airite a son pere que ecri pour— enssenge les Banbara en religon. le copissite Almamy malick Yattara.

[11] A non-existing form in Standard Bamana, which might be Maninka in origin.

	Transliteration	Transcription	Translation
كُو كَا لَجِي نِجِيِي بسَرَ أَ بلَ إِ بِجِيِي لَبس	ku$_1$w kaʾ lağey$_1$ niğiyy$_1$ sera ʾʔa bela ʾʔ$_i$i biğiyy$_1$ lase	9. kò k'à lájɛ́ ní jí séra à bɛ́ɛ lá. Í bɛ́ jí lásé	9. hand and examine if water has reached everywhere. Bring water
إِ كـ تُونَّا كَا جِيكِـ إِ جُو كُنَوْ مَا إِ بِجِي لَبس	ʾʔ$_i$ k- tu$_1$wn^{2}aʾ kaʾ ğiyk-i ʾʔ$_i$ ğuw kunaw^0 maʾ ʾʔ$_i$ biğiy$_1$ lase	10. í kòton ná kà jí kɛ́ í jùkunanw mà. Í bɛ́ jí lásé	10. to the lower part of your back, pour water on your buttocks. Make it in a way
إِ كَا كَانَا. كَا جِكِـ إِ بَرَ كُرُ مَا إِ كَجَنْتُ إِ پِر لَا	ʾʔ$_i$ kaʾ kaʾnaʾ. kaʾ ğik$_4$-i ʾʔ$_i$ bara ku$_1$ru$_1$ maʾ ʾʔ$_i$i kağan^{0}tu$_1$ ʾʔ$_i$i yere lʾa	11. í kó à ká nà kà jìgin í bàrakɔrɔ mà, í ká jàntó í yɛ̀rɛ lá	11. that the water may reach the lower belly, take care of
إِ كَنَا سى إِ كِيَا لَ نِإِ بُلُپِي وُ تُمَ و كُولِ	ʾʔ$_i$ kanaʾ sey$_1$ ʾʔ$_i$i keyaʾ la niʾʔ$_i$i bulu$_1$yey$_1$ wu$_1$ tuma w ku$_1$wli	12. í kàná sé í kɛ̀ya lá ní í bólo yé. Wò tùma wò kòli	12. not touching your private parts with your hand. Then the ablutions
كلِ أ بِيوَس سلِجِي لَ. وُ د پِي جناب كُولِپِي	kele ʾʔ biywasa seliğiy$_1$ la. wu$_1$ de yey$_1$ ğnʾb ku$_1$wliyey$_1$	13. kɛ́len, à b'í wàsa séliji lá. Wò dè yé jànabakoli yé	13. are performed, the ablution water has sufficed you. These are the religious ablutions
مِنْفُورَ الله سِرَاى لَ	min^{0}f$_1$u$_1$wra ʾll^{2a}h siraʾy$_1$ la	14. mín fɔ́ra Ála síra lá.	14. that were mentioned in God's way.
الله مَا أنْ دِمنَا ع امين.	ʾll^{2a}h maʾ ʾʔn$_1$^{0} demenaʾ ʿ ʾmyn$_1$.	15. Ála má án dɛ̀mɛna. Àmiina.	15. May God help us. Amen!

Text 3

Almamy Yattara's comment:

> The possessor of the document "Kalan bidamine ni alatogo ye", Bory Bary, inherited from his father, the same Madou Bari, who wrote (it) in order to teach the Bamana people. The copyist Almamy Malik Yattara in San in 1972.[12]

[12] The original text:
le detantere de locimen kalan bidamine ni alatogo ye Bory Bary airite a son pere le meme Amadou Bari que eciri pour enssenge le Bambara. le copisste—Almamy malick yattara. a san

	Transliteration	Transcription	Translation
Page 1			
كَلَنْ بِدَمِنْ نِ الله ثُكُپِي أَن صَلِلَ الله تِيرَ لاَ	kalan^0 bidamine ni ʼll^{2a}h tu$_1$k$_4$u$_1$yey$_1$ ʼʔn$_1$ ṣalila ʼll^{2a}h tiyra laʼ	1. Kàlan bɛ́ dámìnɛ ní Ála tɔ́gɔ yé àní sálila Ála círa lá	1. Learning begins with the name of God and greeting to the Messenger of God
مِيِنْ ثُكْ كُ محمد هِنِى نِكِسِ بِأ كَ.أَ كُ سِلَامِيَا	miyn$_1$^{0} tu$_1$k$_4$-u$_1$ k-u$_1$ mḥmd hiney$_1$ nikisi biʼʔ k-a. ʼʔa k-u$_1$ silaʼmeyaʼ	2. mín tɔ́gɔ kó Muhammad, hínɛ ní kísi bɛ́ à kàn. À kɔ́ sìlamɛya	2. whose name is Muḥammad, he is merciful and he is the Saviour. Besides, Islam
سَمَاسِنْ پِي دُورُ پِي كَسِرِيَكِ تِينِبَتُ مَسَ مَكِ	samaʼsen$_1$^{0} yey$_1$ duwru yey$_1$ kasereyak-e tiy$_3$batu masa mak-e	3. sàmasen yé dúuru yé: kà sèereya kɛ́ *tìɲɛbaatɔ màsa mákɛ*[13]	3. has its five buttresses: to witness the verity of the King Lord:
فُو نِمَسَ كِلنْپِي مِينْپِي الله محمد فَنَى الله كَ تِيدِنْدْ	f$_1$u$_1$w nimasa kelen^{0}yey$_1$ miyn^{0}yey$_1$ ʼll^{2a}h mḥmd f$_1$anay$_1$ ʼll^{2a}h k-a tiyden^{0}du$_1$	4. fɔ́ ní màsa kélen yé mín yé Ála, Muhamadu fána Ála ká cíden dòn;	4. say that Lord is one, and it is God, and Muḥammad is the Prophet of God;
كَاٍ جِجَنْ سَلِ لَا أَنِ سَنِيَا كَسُنْ سُنْكَلُو لَ كَا زَكَا بُو.	kaʼʔ$_i$i ǧiǧan$_1$^{0} sali laʼ ʼʔani saniyaʼ kasun$_1$^{0} sun^{0}kalu$_1$w la kaʼ zakaʼ bu$_1$w.	5. kà í jíjà sáli lá àní sániya; kà sún súnkalo lá; kà jáka bɔ́;	5. to be assiduous in prayer and in cleanliness; to keep Lent; to donate alms;
كَهِجِكِ نِسبَا پِي نِنْدُورُ, نُنُنْ دِ پِي سِلامِيِا پِي	kahiǧik-e nisebaʼ yey$_1$ nin^{0}duwru, nunun$_1$^{0} de yey$_1$ silʼmeyaʼ yey$_1$	6. kà híji kɛ́ nʼí sé bʼà yé. Nìn dúuru, nìnnu dè yé sìlamɛya yé.	6. to make hajj if you can. These five [duties], it is the Islam.
نِمَا پِي نِنُنْ دُنْ كَا بَارَ, أَ كِيرَ سِلَامِپِي. يُمَنْيَا.	nimaʼ yey$_1$ ninun$_1$^{0} du$_1$n$_1$^{0} kaʼ baʼra. ʼʔ keyra silaʼmayey$_1$. y$_3$uman^{0}yaʼ.	7. Ní màa yé nìnnu dɔ́n kʼà báara, à kɛ́ra sìlama yé. Ɲùmanya.	7. If a person knows these [duties] and performs them, he is a Muslim. Goodness.

en 1972.

[13] The syntax of this phrase is not clear.

	Transliteration	Transcription	Translation
يُمَنْيَا پُمونْپِي إِكَ الله تِينِتِكِپِي كَا محمد تِينِتِكِيَا إِكَا مِلِكَوْ	y$_3$uman^{0}ya’ y$_2$umawn^{0}yey$_1$ ’ʔ$_i$i k-a ’ll^{2a}h tiy$_3$tik$_4$iyey$_1$ ka’ mḥmd tiy$_3$tikya’ ’ʔ$_i$i ka’ melekew^0	8. Ɲùmanya: ɲùman yé í ká Ála tìɲɛtigiya kà Muhammadu tìɲɛtigiya, í ká mɛ̀lɛkɛw	8. Goodness: It is good that you recognize the truth of God and Muḥammad, the truth of
تِينتكِيِي كَا أَلْجَنَّ تِينِتِكِيِي كَا جَهَنَّمَ تِينتكِيَا فَنَى كَا أَلْكِيَوْمَ	tiy$_3$tk$_4$iyay$_1$ ka’ ’ʔal^{0}ğan^{2}a tiy$_3$tik$_4$iyay$_1$ ka’ ğah^{2}an^{2}ama tiy$_3$tk$_4$iya’ f$_1$anay$_1$ ka’ ’ʔal^{0}kiyaw^{0}ma	9. tìɲɛtigiya, kà àlijana tìɲɛtigiya kà jàhanama tìɲɛtigiya fána kà álikiyama	9. angels, the truth of Paradise, and also the truth of Hell, the truth
دُ وُ تِينِتِكِيِي وُ دِ بِمَا كِ سِلَامَا يُمَنْپِي. سِلَامَا	du$_1$ wu$_1$ tiy$_3$tik$_4$iyay$_1$ wu$_1$ de bima’ ke sila’ma’ y$_3$uman^{0}yey$_1$. sila’ma’	10. dón wò tìɲɛtigiya, wò dè bɛ́ màa kɛ́ sìlamɛ ɲùman yé. Sìlamɛ	10. of the Doomsday, it is what makes one a good Muslim. A Muslim,
أَبِوَكَلِ الله لَا. وَكَلِ يُمُنپِي. وَكَلِ دِ پِي نِمَا يِمِنْ سُرُ	’ʔabiwakali ’ll^{2a}h la’. wakali y$_3$umunyey$_1$. wakali de yey$_1$ nima’ yemin$_1^0$ su$_1$ru$_1$	11. à bɛ́ wàkali Álla lá. Wàkali ɲùman yé. Wàkali dè yé: ní màa yé mín sɔ̀rɔ,	11. he relies on God. To rely, it means: whatever one receives,
آكَا دُنِ الله دِ يا دِيمَا نِمَا مِيِنْ سُرُ إِكا دُ الله دِ مَا	’a ka’ du$_1$en$_1$ ’ll^{a}h de y’ diyma’ nima’ miyn$_1^0$ su$_1$ru$_1$ ’ʔ$_i$ k’ du$_1$ ’ll^{a}h de ma’	12. à k’à dɔ́n, Ála dè y’à d’í mà; n’í má mín sɔ̀rɔ, í k’à dɔ́n, Ála dè m’à	12. he knows that it is God who has given it to him; whatever you do not receive, you know that it is God who
دِيمَى نِإِ بَنَنَا إِكَا دُ الله دِ يا سِيمَى نِإِ سَارَ الله دِ يا سيمَى	diymay$_1$ ni’ʔ$_i$i banana’ ’ʔ$_i$i ka’ du$_1$ ’ll^{a}h de y’ siymay$_1$ ni’ʔ$_i$i sa’ra ’ll^{a}h de y’ seymay$_1$	13. d’í mà. Ní í bànana í k’à dɔ́n Ála dè y’à s’í mà, n’í sàra, Ála dè y’à sé é mà.	13. hasn’t given it to you. If you have fallen ill, you know that it is God who has sent it to you, if you die, it is God who has sent it to you.
جِنِى الله دِ يا دَ نِسكِپِي نِأَدَمَ دِنْ سُرُلَ أ نَا سِكِى	ğiy$_3$ey$_1$ ’ll^{2a}h de y’ da nisek$_4$yey$_1$ ni’ʔadama den$_1^0$ su$_1$ru$_1$la ’ʔ na’ sek$_4$ey$_1$	14. Díɲɛ, Ála dè y’à dá ní sɛ̀gɛn yé. Ní ádamaden sɔ̀rɔla, à ná sɛ̀gɛn.	14. The world, God has created it with sufferings. If a human being is born, he will suffer.

	Transliteration	Transcription	Translation
نا دِبسرَى أَنَا سبكـ نَا كُقُنَا أ نا سبكِ نَا فَارَ أَ نَا سبكِى نَا تِسِنُكُب	n' deseray$_1$ 'ana' sek$_4$-e na' ku$_1$qu$_1$na' 'ʔ n' sek$_4$e na' f$_1$a'ra 'ʔ na' sek$_4$ey$_1$ na' tisinu$_1$k$_4$-u$_1$e	15. N'à dɛ́sɛra, à ná sɛ̀gɛn. N'à kɔ́gɔra, à ná sɛ̀gɛn. N'à fàara, à ná sɛ̀gɛn. N'à tí sìnɔgɔ,	15. If he fails, he will suffer. When he arrives at maturity, he will suffer. If he is killed, he will suffer. If he is not asleep,
أَ نا سبكـ نا مِينَى سِنُكُرَ ا نا سبكـ نا مِينَ جُولِلَا أ نا سبكـ نا مِينْ	'ʔ n' sek$_4$-e n' meynay$_1$ sinu$_1$k$_4$u$_1$ra 'ʔ n' sek$_4$-e n' meyn$_1$a ǧu$_1$wlila' 'ʔ n' sek$_4$-e n' meyn$_1^0$	16. à ná sɛ̀gɛn. N'à mɛ́ɛna sìnɔgɔ lá, à ná sɛ̀gɛn. N'à mɛ́ɛnna jɔ̀li lá, à ná sɛ̀gɛn. N'à mɛ́ɛn(na)	16. he will suffer. If he sleeps too long he will suffer. If he stands too long, he will suffer. If he
سِكِلِلَ أَ نَا سبكب وُ تُمَ مَا كَا الله دُنْ نِكُب يِي (?) أَنِ بَنْكِيِي(?) و بِمُكـ	sik$_4$ilila 'ʔ na' sek$_4$e wu$_1$ tuma ma' ka' 'll^{2a}h du$_1$n$_1^0$ nik$_4$-ub yey$_1$ [?] ʔ'ani ban^{0}k$_4$eyey$_1$ [?] w bimu$_1$k$_4$-u$_1$	17. sìgili lá, à ná sɛ̀gɛn. Wò tùma màa ká Ála dɔ́n ní kó bɛ́ɛ [?] yé, àní bánge yé [?], wò bɛ́ mɔ̀gɔ	17. sits too long, he will suffer. So, man should know that God is everything, He is Creator [?], He
Page 2			
وُ دِ بِمُكـ كِسِ الله مَا أَنْ كِسِرَى	wu$_1$ de bimu$_1$k$_4$-u$_1$ kisi 'll^{2a}h ma' 'ʔan$_1^0$ kisiray$_1$	1. wò dè bɛ́ mɔ̀gɔ kísi. Ála má án kísira.	1. He saves man. May God save us.
أَ بَانَ	'ʔ ba'na	2. À bánna.	2. It is the end.

Text 4

Almamy Yattara's comment:

> The possessor of the medical document for hernia that is named "kookily foura". The same Bory Bary. Written by his father Amadou Bary, a Muslim cleric. The copyist Almamy Malik Yattara in 1972 in San.[14]

[14] The original text:
le detantere de docimen medicalman pour le hérni conapele kookili foura. le meme Bory Bary—eciri par son pere Amadou Bay marabou. le kopisste Almamy malick Yattara. a 1972 a san.

	Transliteration	Transcription	Translation
نِيِي ڢُرَ كُمَيِي كُوكِلِ ڢُرَ	niyey$_1$ f$_1$ura kumayey$_1$ ku$_1$w kili f$_1$ura	1. Nìn yé fúra kúma yé, kɔ́kili fúra.	1. These are words of a medicine, a testicle [hernia] medicine.
ڢُرَ مِيِنْ بـ كُوكِلِ ڢُرَ كـ. كُوكِلِ -	f$_1$ura miyn$_1$^{0} be ku$_1$w kili f$_1$ura k-e. ku$_1$w kili -	2. Fúra mín bɛ́ kɔ́kili fúrakɛ́. Kɔ́kili,	2. A medicine which heals testicles. Testicles,
نَا بَنَنَا أَ بِكـ بَرَكُرُ دِمِيِي	na' banana' 'ʔa bik-e baraku$_1$ru$_1$ dimiyey$_1$	3. n'à bànana, à bɛ́ kɛ́ bàrakɔrɔdimi yé.	3. if there is a disease, it manifests itself as an ache of the lower belly.
وُ ڢُرَكـ سُكُو إِ بِ كُوكُنْ مُوكًا	wu$_1$ f$_1$urak-e suk$_4$uw 'ʔ$_i$e bi k$_4$uwkun$_1$^{0} muwk$_4$a$^{n'}$	4. Wò fúrakɛ súgu: é bɛ́ gɔ̀kun[15] mùgan	4. Here is a means to treat it: get twenty-one beans of the wonderbean plant [Canavalia ensiformis],
أَنِ كِلِ بُو إِ بُو تُبِ كَا مُو كُسُبِ	'ʔani kele bu$_1$w 'ʔ$_i$i bu$_1$w tu$_1$bi ka' mu$_1$w ku$_1$su$_1$be	5. àní kélen bɔ́, í b'ò tóbi k'à mɔ̀ kósɛbɛ.	5. boil them till they are very well cooked.
وُ تُمَ إِ بَا وُرُ إِ بِ تُمْبُتُ كُكُ دُونِي	wu$_1$ tuma 'ʔ$_i$i ba' wu$_1$ru 'ʔ$_i$i bi tum^{0}butu ku$_1$k$_4$-u$_1$ du$_1$wniy$_1$	6. Wò tùma í b'à wɔ́rɔ, í bɛ́ Tumbutu kɔ̀gɔ dɔ́ɔni	6. Then peel them, put a little salt of Timbuktu
كَا لَ ڢَا كـ تِمِيَي إِ با سِيِي سُكُنُو كَا دَتُكُ	ka' la f$_1$a' k- timiyay$_1$ 'ʔ$_i$i b' siyy$_1$ su$_1$ku$_1$nu$_1$w ka' datuk$_4$-u	7. k'à lá f'à ká tímiya. Í b'à sìi só kɔ́nɔ k'à dátúgu	7. to make it mild. Put it in the house and close it
كَا سُو ڢَنَى دَتُكُ أ دَا لَ نِدُكُ كِيَارَ	ka' su$_1$w f$_1$anay$_1$ datuk$_4$-u 'ʔ da' la niduk$_4$-u k$_4$iya'ra	8. kà só fána dátúgu à dá lá. Ní dùgu jéra	8. and also close the door of the house. At dawn,
إِ بُوتَ كَا دُنْ ڢَاكِي كُنْ بَرَ ڢَا نِجِيِي بَا لَ	'ʔ$_i$i bu$_1$wta ka' dun$_1$^{0} f$_1$a'kiy$_1$ ku$_1$nu$_1$ bara f$_1$a' niǧiy$_1$ ba' la	9. í b'ò tà k'à dún f'à k'í kɔ́nɔbara fá. Ní jí b'à lá	9. take it and eat it so that it fills your belly. If there is a juice,

15 It could be also *nkòkun* 'head of a species of locust', although the following context makes this interpretation less probable.

	Transliteration	Transcription	Translation
إِ بو مِين.نِپِي نْكَلِنِ سُرُ إِ بَا فَكَـ كَا كِلِ بُو	’ʔ$_i$i bw miyn$_1$. niyey$_1$ n^{0}k$_4$eleni su$_1$ru$_1$ ’ʔ$_i$i ba’ f$_1$ak$_4$-a ka’ kili bu$_1$w	10. í b’ò mìn. N’í yé ngèlɛnnin sɔ̀rɔ í b’à fàga k’à kíli bɔ́	10. drink it. If you can get a ground squirrel, kill it, take its testicles
كَا دُنْ كَا هَبَرَ أَكَـ وُ تُمَى إِ بِيجَنْتُو إِ پَرَ لَ مُوسُّوْ فِى	ka’ dun$_1^0$ ka’ haera ’ʔa k-a wu$_1$ tumay$_1$ ’ʔ$_i$i biyğan^{0}tu$_1$w ’ʔ$_i$i yerae la muws^{2}u$_1$w^0 f$_1$ey$_1$	11. k’à dún kà hɛ́ra à kàn. Wò tùma í b’í jàntó í yɛ̀rɛ lá mùsow fɛ̀	11. and eat them, and be reassured with it. Then abstain from women
فُا كَسِى تِلِ مُكَـ يُوكُنَّا وُ تُمَ ا	f$_1$u’ kasey$_1$ tile muk$_4$-a y$_3$u$_1$wk$_4$u$_1$n^{2}a’ wu$_1$ tuma ’	12. fó à ká sé tìle mùgan ɲɔ̀gɔn ná. Wò tùma	12. about twenty days. Then
إِ كنيرَى.فُرَى أَبِكـ كَا تُكُـ تُكُـ يُو نَى	’ʔ$_i$i keneyaray$_1$. f$_1$uray$_1$ ’ʔabik-e ka’ tuk$_4$-u tuk$_4$-u y$_3$u$_1$w nay$_1$	13. í kɛ́nɛyara. Fúra, à bɛ́ kɛ́ kà tùgu-tùgu ɲɔ́gɔn ná	13. you will be healed. The medicines follow each other
فَا كَا دَفَا نَا دَفَارَ إِ نَا نَفَيِي الله كُو	f$_1$a’ ka’ daf$_1$a’ na’ daf$_1$a’ra ’ʔ$_i$i na’ naf$_1$ayey$_1$ ’ll^{2a}h ku$_1$w	14. f’à ká dáfá. N’à dáfára, í n’à nàfa yé. Álakò	14. till it is completed. When it is completed, you will see its benefit. Provided that
فُرَ كَكِـ نِكَلَنْ پِي نِي يِرِ پِي. أَمْبَا نَفَا سُرُ	f$_1$ura kak-e nikalan^0 yey$_1$ niy$_1$ yiri yey$_1$. ’ʔam^{0}ba’ naf$_1$a’ su$_1$ru$_1$	15. fúra ká kɛ́ ní kàlan yé ní yíri yé. Án b’à nàfa sɔ̀rɔ,	15. the medicine be applied according to the instructions and with a reason. We shall benefit from it
نِي مَسَا.سُونَى مِينْپِي الله پِي.	niy$_1$ masa’. su$_1$wnay$_1$ miyn^{0}yey$_1$ ’ll^{2a}h yey$_1$.	16. ní Màsa sɔ̀nna mín yé Ála yé.	16. if Lord agrees, for God.

Text 5

Almamy Yattara’s comment:

> The possessor of the document “cilissi foura” is again Bory Bary. Found in the belongings of his father Amadou Bary, a Muslim cleric. Copied by Almamy Malik Yattara in 1972 in San.[16]

16 The original text:

	Transliteration	Transcription	Translation
نِنْپِي كِلِسِـ فُورَ پِي نِمُكْـ بَنَنَا	nin^{0}yey$_{1}$ kilis-i fuwra yey$_{1}$ nimu$_{1}$k$_{4}$-u$_{1}$ banana’	1. Nìn yé kílisifura yé. Ní mɔ̀gɔ bànana,	1. This is a medicine for magic spell. If a person falls ill,
إِ مَنَا بَنَا كِلِيَلِنْ پِي مُكُپِي إِ بَا بُلُمِنِ	’ʔ$_{i}$i mana’ bana’ k$_{4}$eleyalen$_{1}^{0}$ yey$_{1}$ mu$_{1}$k$_{4}$u$_{1}$f$_{1}$ey$_{1}$ ’ʔ$_{i}$i ba’ bulu$_{1}$mine	2. í mána bàna gɛ̀lɛyalen yé mɔ̀gɔ fɛ̀, í b’à bólo mìnɛ	2. if you see that the person is seriously ill, take him by the hand
كَا پْنِسِـ يِرِ مَا وُ يِرِنِنْ تُكُـ كُـ كُنْجِي	ka’ y$_{3}$es-i yiri ma’ wu$_{1}$ yirinin$_{1}^{0}$ tu$_{1}$k$_{4}$-u$_{1}$ k-u$_{1}$ kun^{0}ǧey$_{1}$	3. k’à ɲɛ́sín yíri mà, wò yírinin tɔ́gɔ kó kùnjɛ.	3. and direct him to the plant whose name is *kunjɛ* [Guiera senegalensis shrub].
إِ بَا فُ يِرِ مَا يِرِبَا كُنْجِي إِ دِ پِي يِرِ كُرُ پِي يِرِ	’ʔ$_{i}$i ba’ f$_{1}$u$_{1}$ yiri ma’ yiriba’ kun^{0}ǧey$_{1}$ ’ʔ$_{i}$e de yey$_{1}$ yiri ku$_{1}$ru$_{1}$ yey$_{1}$ yiri	4. Í b’à fɔ́ yíri mà yíriba kùnjɛ. É dè yé yíri kɔ̀rɔ yé, yíri	4. You say about the plant, *kunjɛ* big tree. You have seen a big tree, it is an old
كُرُ دِ بِبَنَا كُرُ فُرَكَي. بَنَبَاتُنِ أَ سِرَى مَا كُرُوْ بِلَ	ku$_{1}$ru de bibana’ ku$_{1}$ru$_{1}$ f$_{1}$urakaey$_{1}$. banaba’tu$_{1}$ni^{n} ’ʔa seray$_{1}$ ma’ ku$_{1}$ru$_{1}$w^{0} bela	5. kɔ̀rɔ dè bɛ́ bàna kɔ̀rɔ fúrakɛ́. Bànabaatɔ, ní à séra màa kɔ̀rɔw bɛ́ɛ lá	5. tree that heals old disease. A sick person, if it was a question of any old person,
أُ مَسِي كَا بَنَا كُرُ فُرَكِي كَا كِنِيَا كُنْجِي.	’ʔu masey$_{1}$ ka’ bana’ ku$_{1}$ru$_{1}$ f$_{1}$urakey$_{1}$ ka’ keneya’ kun^{0}ǧey$_{1}$.	6. ù má sé kà bàna kɔ̀rɔ fúrakɛ́ k’à kɛ́nɛya. Kùnjɛ	6. they could not treat old diseases and heal them. *Kunjɛ*,
مْبِيدِلِ نِفُرَ پِي مِينْ بِإِ كَـ بُلُوْ لَ تِلِبِبُلُ	m^{0}biydeli nif$_{1}$ura yey$_{1}$ miyn$_{1}^{0}$ bi’ʔ$_{i}$i k-a buluw^{0} la tilebebulu	7. ń b’í déli ní fúra yé mín b’í kàn búluw lá, tìlebinbulu	7. I beg you, if all the medicine that you have in foliage, the western foliage
نِكُرُنْفِي بُلُ نِبَافَ بُلُ نِوُرُدُكُـ بُلُ پِي	niku$_{1}$ru$_{1}$n^{0}f$_{1}$ey$_{1}$ bulu niba’f$_{1}$a bulu niwu$_{1}$ru$_{1}$duk$_{4}$-u bulu yey$_{1}$	8. ní kɔ́rɔnfɛbulu ní báfanbúlu ní wòrodugubulu yé,	8. and eastern foliage, and northern foliage and southern foliage,

le detantere de dociman de cilissi foura. tougoure Bory Barty tourve danles afer de son pere—Amadou Bary le marabou. copié par Almamy malick yattara a san en 1972 a san.

	Transliteration	Transcription	Translation
وُ تُمَ إِ بيجُی دُوُنِی وُتُمَ إِ بُلُكَرِ فَانْبِفِی	wu$_1$ tuma ʾʔ$_i$i byğu$_1$y$_1$ du$_1$wu$_1$niy$_1$ wu$_1$tuma ʾʔ$_i$i bulukari f$_1$aʾn^{0}bef$_1$ey$_1$	9. wò tùma í b'í jɔ̀ dɔ́ɔni, wò tùma í b'òlú kári fàn bɛ́ɛ fɛ̀,	9. then stay a little bit, then cut it everywhere,
إِ بُو مَرَ إِ بِتَنَا پِی إِ كَسُو إِ بَا تُبِ بَنَبَاتُ	ʾʔ$_i$i bu$_1$w mara ʾʔ$_i$i bitanaʾ yey$_1$ ʾʔ$_i$i kasu$_1$w ʾʔ$_i$i baʾ tu$_1$bi banabaʾtu$_1$	10. í b'ò màra í bɛ́ táa n'à yé í ká só, í b'à tóbi, bànabaatɔ	10. keep it and bring it to your house, cook it, let the sick person
بَا مِ كَا كُو كَا مِ كَا كُو كَا كُو فُو سِسبكِ	baʾ mi kaʾ ku$_1$w kaʾ mi kaʾ ku$_1$w kaʾ ku$_1$w f$_1$u$_1$w siy$_3$isek$_4$-i	11. b'à mìn k'à kò k'à mìn k'à kò k'à kò fóo sìɲɛ séegin	11. drink it and wash him, let him drink it and wash him, and wash him, up to eight times
تِلبسكِ كُنُو بنبَاتُ أَ بكِنيَا.ا با مُنُدُوُنِی	tilesek$_4$-i ku$_1$nu$_1$w bnbaʾtu$_1$ ʾʔa bkeneyaʾ. ʾ bʾ muy$_3$udu$_1$wu$_1$niy$_1$	12. tìle séegin kɔ́nɔ. Bànabaatɔ, à bɛ́ kɛ́nɛya. À b'à mùɲu dɔ́ɔnin	12. during eight days. The sick person will recover. Let him wait a little
تُكُ تِلِ سبكِ نَا ما كِنيا.إِ بِسكِ إِ بِفُلتَكِ	tuk$_4$-u tile sek$_4$-i naʾ mʾ keneyʾ. ʾʔ$_i$i bisek$_4$-i ʾʔ$_i$e bif$_1$u$_1$lu$_1$tak-e	13. túgun tìle séegin, n'à má kɛ́nɛya, í b'à sègin, é bɛ́ fɔ́lɔ tá kɛ́	13. again eight days, if he has not recovered, repeat it, do it as for the first time
فَا كَ سبدَانًّا إِ بِتَا سُو إِ بَا تُبِ كَا كِ فُلُ	f$_1$aʾ k-a sedaʾn^{2}aʾ ʾʔ$_i$i bitaʾ su$_1$w ʾʔ$_i$i baʾ tu$_1$bi kaʾ k-e f$_1$u$_1$lu$_1$	14. f'à ká sé dàn ná. Í bɛ́ táa só, í b'à tóbi k'à kɛ́ fɔ́lɔ	14. till the end. Go home, cook it and do it
تَا يُكُنْپِی.فُو سِپِی سبكِ نِبنبَاتُ ما كِنيَا	taʾ y$_2$u$_1$k$_4$u$_1$n^{0}yey$_1$. f$_1$u$_1$w siy$_3$ey$_1$ sek$_4$-i nibnbaʾtu$_1$ mʾ keneyaʾ	15. tá ɲɔ̀gɔn yé, fóo sìɲɛ séegin. Ni bànabaatɔ má kɛ́nɛya	15. like the first time, and so, eight times. If the sick person has not recovered
وُ لَ و تُمَ أَ بِسَا.وُ دِ پِی كُنْجِی فُورَ پِی تت	wu$_1$ la w tuma ʾʔa bisaʾ. wu$_1$ de yey$_1$ kun^{0}ğey$_1$ f$_1$uwra yey$_1$ tt	16. wò lá, wò tùma à bɛ́ sà. Wò dè yé kùnjɛfura yé.	16. this time, then he will die. It is the medicine of *kunjɛ*.
اَ بَانَ	a baʾn$_1$a	17. À bánna.	17. It is the end.

5. Grammatological Properties of the Bamana Ajami from San

Table 1: Independent units of Bamana Ajami orthography

Letter	Transcription	Phonemic value	Transliteration
ا	∅	∅	ʾ
ب	*b*	/b/	b
ت	*t, c*	/t/, /t͜ʃ/	t
ح	*h*	/h/	ḥ
ج	*j*	/d͜ʒ/	ǧ
د	*d*	/d/	d
ر	*r*	/r/	r
ز	*j*	/d͜ʒ/	z
س	*s*	/s/	s
ص	*s*	/s/	ṣ
ڢ	*f*	/f/	f_1
ڧ	*g*	/g/	q
ک	*k*	/k/	k-
ࢴ	*g*	/g/	k_4
ل	*l*	/l/	l
م	*m*	/m/	m
ن / ں[17]	*n*; vocalic nasality	/n/	n_1 / n
ڹ	*ɲ*	/ɲ/	y_3
ه	*h*	/h/	h
و	*w*; length of *u, o, ɔ*	/w/, /Vː/	w
ي	y, *ɲ*; length of *i, e, ɛ*	/j/, /ɲ/, /Vː/	y
ۑ	*ɲ*	/ɲ/	y_2

Comments

- ح appears only in the name of the Prophet محمد ⟨mḥmd⟩ Muḥammad.
- ز is used representing *j* only once in an Arabic loanword, i.e. زَكَا ⟨zakaʾ⟩ *jáka* ‘alms’ (3: 5) (from Arabic *zakāt*)

[17] In final position.

– ص appears only once, in an Arabic loanword, i.e. صَلِلَ ⟨ṣalila⟩ *sáli lá* 'with a greeting' (3: 1) (from Arabic *ṣalāt*).
– ع appears only once (2: 15), with its meaning remaining unclear.
– ق (with two upper dots as in *mašriqī*) representing *g* occurs only once, i.e. in the word كُقْنَا ⟨ku$_1$qu$_1$naʾ⟩ *kɔ́gɔra* 'arrived at maturity [perfective form]' (3: 15).
– *Nūn* in word-final position appears usually without a dot, i.e. as ں. However, the dotted variant, i.e. ن, is also encountered in the texts.
– The usual graphemic representation of *ɲ* as (with two lower dots and one upper dot) never appears in word-final positions. If a word has *ɲ* in the final syllable, is always followed by ى. Therefore, it is impossible to figure out which Arabic character served as its base, i.e. ى or ب.
– ي is used representing *ɲ* in only one single case, سِيِ ⟨siyey$_1$⟩ *sìɲɛ* 'time' (1/2: 6) (which may be a copyist's or author's error).
– ۑ appears in the texts only twice, i.e. in ۑُمَوْنۑ ⟨y$_2$umawn^{0}y$_2$⟩ *ɲùman yé* 'it is good …' (3/1: 8), and in ۑُكُنْۑ ⟨y$_2$u$_1$k$_4$u$_1$n^{0}ye⟩ *ɲɔ́gɔn yé* 'with each other' (5: 15).
– Prenasalization of initial consonants is marked in the same manner as word-internal nasalization by a *nūn* with a *sukūn*, i.e. نْ ⟨n^0⟩, such as in نْكِلِنِ ⟨n^{0}k$_4$eleni⟩ *ngὲlɛnnin* 'ground squirrel'. Compare also a form كُو ⟨k$_4$u$_1$w⟩ *gɔ̀* 'wonderbean [Canavalia ensiformis]' (4: 4), which is attested in Charles Bailleul's dictionary (2007) as *ngɔ̀* (the prenasalization in this word might be absent from the dialect of the manuscript's author).

5.1. *Diacritics*

Fatḥa, kasra, and *ḍamma* are used for representation of *a*, *i*, and *u*, respectively, while *sukūn* represents the lack of any vowel (in fact, it is used only with *nūn*).

Tašdīd is rarely employed to indicate gemination of a nasal sonant, as in كُلُنَّا ⟨ku$_1$lu$_1$n^{2}aʾ⟩ *kɔ̀lɔn ná* 'to the well' (1/2: 9); mostly it is used with unclear purpose, e.g. دِمِسَّوْ ⟨dimis^{2}aw^0⟩ *dénmisɛnw* 'children' (1/1: 16). It also occurs in Arabic loanwords in order to reproduce the original orthography, e.g. أَلْجَنَّ ⟨ʾʔal^{0}ǧan^{2}a⟩ *àlijana* 'Paradise' (3/1: 9), جَهَّنَّمَ ⟨ǧah^{2}an^{2}ama⟩[18] *jàhanama* 'hell' (3/1: 9).

[18] The *tašdīd* on top of the *hāʾ* was put here mistakenly by the writer.

In Bamana Ajami orthography, new diacritics have been introduced for the representation of middle vowels: an 'inverted *ḍamma*', i.e. ◌ٗ ⟨u$_1$⟩, representing *o* or *ɔ*, as well as a lower dot, i.e. ◌ٜ ⟨e⟩, representing *e* and *ɛ*. There is also a combination of lower dot + *fatḥa*, i.e. ◌َٜ ⟨ae⟩, which represents the open front vowel *ɛ*, and which is used only in text 4: هَٜرَ ⟨haera⟩ *hɛ́ra* 'be in peace' (4: 11), يٜرَٜ ⟨yerae⟩ *yɛ̀rɛ* 'self' (4: 11).

Generally, vocalic diacritics are provided. However, they may be omitted from time to time, apparently due to negligence of the writer or copyist.

Diacritics representing vowels which are not preceded by a consonant are placed on top of a supporting *ʾalif hamza*, i.e. أ ⟨'ʔ⟩ or إ ⟨'ʔ$_i$⟩, as in أُ ⟨'ʔu⟩ *ù* 'they' (1/2: 6), إٜ ⟨'ʔ$_i$e⟩ *é* 'you [sg. emphatic]' (1/2: 3).

Vocalic nasality is marked either by *mīm* in word-internal position, when the nasal vowel is followed by a labial consonant, or by *nūn* with *sukūn*, i.e. نْ ⟨n^0⟩, in all the other contexts, e.g. كَرَنْتٜلَ كُٗلُٗمْبَا ⟨karan^{0}tela ku$_1$lu$_1$m^{0}ba'⟩ *Karantɛla kɔ̀lɔnba* 'big well of Karantela' (1/1: 1), يَنْ ⟨yan$_1$^{0}⟩ *yàn* 'here' (1/1: 1). Not infrequently, nasality remains unmarked in word-final position, e.g. دُٗ ⟨du$_1$⟩ versus دُٗنْ ⟨du$_1$n$_1$^{0}⟩ *dɔ́n* 'to know' (1/2: 1) (both spelling variants appear in the same line), بَافَ ⟨ba'f$_1$a⟩ *bá fàn* 'north' (1/2: 7), أَ بِفِيٜ ⟨'ʔa bif$_1$iye⟩ *à bí fíyen* 'he will become blind' (1/1: 6), كٜلٜ ⟨kele⟩ *kélen* 4: 5 'one'. More rarely, and probably by negligence, it also remains unmarked in word-internal position, as in دٜنْكُودِ ⟨den^{0}kuwdi⟩ *dénkundi* 'baptism' (1/2: 8). When followed by the plural marker *-w* /ù/, nasality is never marked in the spelling of vowels, e.g. دُكُلٜوْ ⟨duk$_4$ulew^0⟩ *-dúgulenw* 'natives' (1/2: 2), دُنَوْ ⟨dunaw^0⟩ *dúnanw* 'strangers' (1/2: 1), نِدٜوْ ⟨nidew^0⟩ *ní dénw* … 'if children …' (1/2: 3).

The syllabic nasal *ń*, which occurs in the 1st pers sg. pronoun of Bamana features in the texts only once, where it is followed by a labial consonant and expressed by a *mīm* with a *sukūn*, مْبِيدٜلِ ⟨m^{0}biydeli⟩ *ń b'í déli* 'I beg you' (5: 10). Supposedly, in all other contexts it is rendered by *nūn* (in the same way as prenasalization and syllable-final nasal).

Vowel length is marked irregularly: بٜيَا سُٗرُٗ ⟨beya' su$_1$ru$_1$⟩ *bɛ́ɛ y'à sɔ̀rɔ* 'all have found it …' (1/1: 1), but تِيڽَبَتُ ⟨tiy$_3$batu⟩ *tìɲɛbaatɔ* 'truthful' (3/1: 3). On the other hand, letters marking vocalic length in Arabic orthography, i.e. ا, ي, and و, may appear where there is no vocalic length in Bamana: نَانَ ⟨na'na⟩ *nàna* 'came' (1/1: 3), سَمَاسٜنْ ⟨sama'sen$_1$^{0}⟩ *sàmasen* 'buttress' (3/1: 3), مِينْ ⟨miyn$_1$^{0}⟩ *mín* relativization marker (3/1: 2).

Quite regularly, vocalic assimilation (usually referred to in descriptions of Bamana as 'elision') is expressed by a letter representing a long vowel in Arabic orthography, particularly when the resulting vowel is a long *aa* or *oo*:

أُكَنَا يِي كَا لَجِي ⟨'ʔu kana' yey$_1$ ka' lağey$_1$⟩ *ù kàn'à* [kànáà] *yé k'à* [káà] *lájɛ́* 'they should not see it' (1/1: 4), إِ بُو تُبِ ⟨'ʔ$_i$i bu$_1$w tu$_1$bi⟩ *í b'ò* [bóò] *tóbi* 'you will cook it' (4: 5). If this assimilation results in an *i*, it is represented as a separate syllable; in such a case, *ii* is written as *kasra* below a supporting *'alif hamza*, with an additional *kasra* on the preceding letter, i.e. ◌ِ إِ ⟨i 'ʔ$_i$i⟩; e.g. كِ إِ سِنْ كُو ⟨k$_2$-i 'ʔ$_i$i sen$_1^0$ ku$_1$w⟩ *k'í sèn kò* 'to wash your feet' (2: 6).

Very frequently, word-finally 'length letters' are encountered which do not express any length in Bamana Ajami orthography, as they do in other orthographic traditions, e.g. وُ كُفِي ⟨wu$_1$ ku$_1$f$_1$ey$_1$⟩ *wò kɔ́ fɛ̀* 'after that' (1/1: 11), سُمَي بِنِي ⟨sumay$_1$ by$_3$ey$_1$⟩ *sùma bí ɲɛ̀* 'food will be abundant' (1/1: 13), سُكُو ⟨suk$_4$uw⟩ *sùgu* 'sort' (4: 4).

The plural marker, /ù/, is rendered by a *wāw* with a *sukūn*, i.e. وْ ⟨w^0⟩, as in مَا كُرُوْ ⟨ma' ku$_1$ru$_1$w^0⟩ *màa kɔ̀rɔw* /màa kɔ́rɔ́ù/ 'old people' (1/1: 3).

The author of the texts makes an effort to maintain the original orthography in Arabic loanwords, although he does not always succeed, as in أَلْكِيَوْمَ ⟨'ʔal^{0}kiyaw^{0}ma⟩ *àlikiyama* 'Doomsday', which should rather be القِيَامة ⟨'alqiya'mẗ⟩ *al-qiyāma*. In any case, the author writes Arabic loanwords which have undergone phonological changes following Bamana Ajami orthographic tradition, such as جِنِي ⟨ğiy$_3$ey$_1$⟩ *jíɲɛ* 'world' (cf. Arabic *dunyā*) (3/1: 14), هَرَ ⟨haera⟩ *hɛ́ra* 'be in peace' (cf. Arabic *ḫayr*) (4: 11).

5.2. *Orthographic Segmentation of Words*

Segmentation of written speech into graphic words in San Bamana Ajami is more or less orderly (especially in comparison with the specimens published in Vydrine 1998). Content words are normally written separately and are fused together only rarely, as in مَا تِبِنِمَا يِي ⟨ma' tibenima' yey$_1$⟩ *Màa tɛ́ bɛ̀n ní màa yé* 'people do not meet each other' [literally 'a man does not meet a man'] (1/2: 10).

Postpositions are mostly, albeit not always, written together with the preceding word, e.g. إِ دِ يِي دُكُلِنْيِي ⟨'ʔe de yey$_1$ duk$_4$ulen^{0}yey$_1$⟩ *é dè yé dùgulen yé* 'you are the native' (1/2: 4), تِلِبِفِي أَنِكُرُنْفِي ⟨tilebif$_1$ey$_1$ 'ʔaniku$_1$ru$_1$n^{0}f$_1$ey$_1$⟩ *tìlebi fɛ̀ àní kɔ́rɔn fɛ̀* 'on the western side and on the eastern side' (1/2: 6). Monosyllabic auxiliaries (predicative markers) are usually written together with either the preceding or the subsequent word.

In some instances, derived words are split up orthographically in accordance with their morpheme boundaries, e.g. دُكُ لِلَا ⟨du$_1$k$_4$-u$_1$ lila'⟩ *dògoli lá* 1/2: 9 'secretly'.

5.3. *The Dialectal Characteristics of the Texts*

The manuscripts are written in a Bamana variety quite close to what is today Standard Bamana, with certain features typical of the eastern dialects, such as the imperfective marker *bí*, as opposed to *bɛ́* in Standard Bamana.

Most often, the lexeme for ‘person’ appears in its eastern dialectal form, i.e. مَا ⟨ma’⟩ *màa* (1/1: 3,5: 5). However, occasionally it may also appear in the western dialectal form, i.e. مُكُ ⟨mu$_1$k$_4$-u$_1$⟩ *mɔ̀gɔ* (5: 1). Throughout all the manuscripts, western forms predominate, e.g. تُكُ ⟨tu$_1$k$_4$-u$_1$⟩ *tɔ́gɔ* ‘name’ (1/1: 8, 3/1: 1, 5: 3) (cf. the eastern form *twàa*).

Occasionally, intervocalic velars are elided, as for example in سِيِ ⟨siyy$_1$⟩ *sìi* ‘to sit’ (4: 7) (cf. Standard Bamana *sìgi*), or يُو نَيِ ⟨y$_3$u$_1$w nay$_1$⟩ *ɲɔ́ɔn ná* ‘to each other’ (4: 13) (cf. Standard Bamana *ɲɔ́gɔn ná*). Elision of intervocalic velar consonants is typical of the Maninka and Mandinka languages spoken in the western part of the Manding area, but also for numerous Manding variants on the southern and eastern periphery of that area.

Also, at times archaic forms are encountered in the texts, such as e.g. كِيَا ⟨k$_4$iya’⟩ *gíya* ‘to grow clear’ (4: 8) (cf. Standard Bamana *jɛ́* or *jɛ́-ya*, Proto-Manding **xóyi*, and in certain Maninka varieties *gé*).

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FIGURES

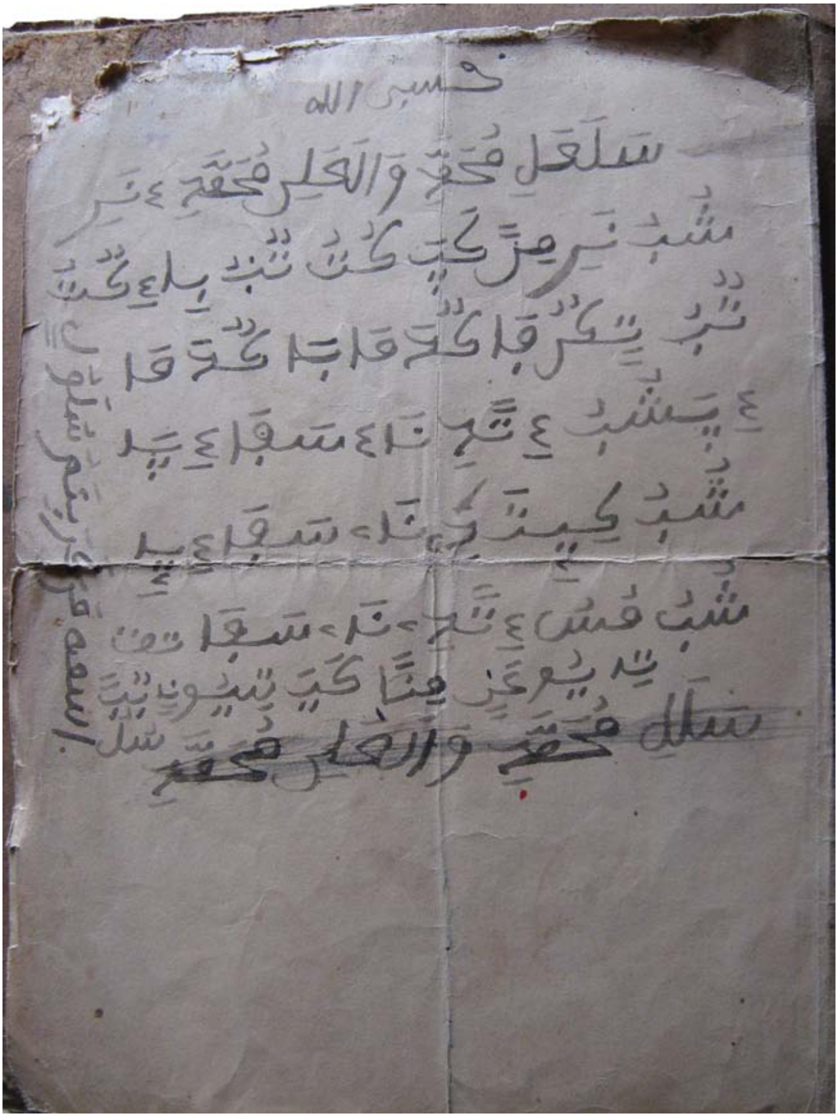


Fig. 1: Mandinka hunters' incantations (text 1)

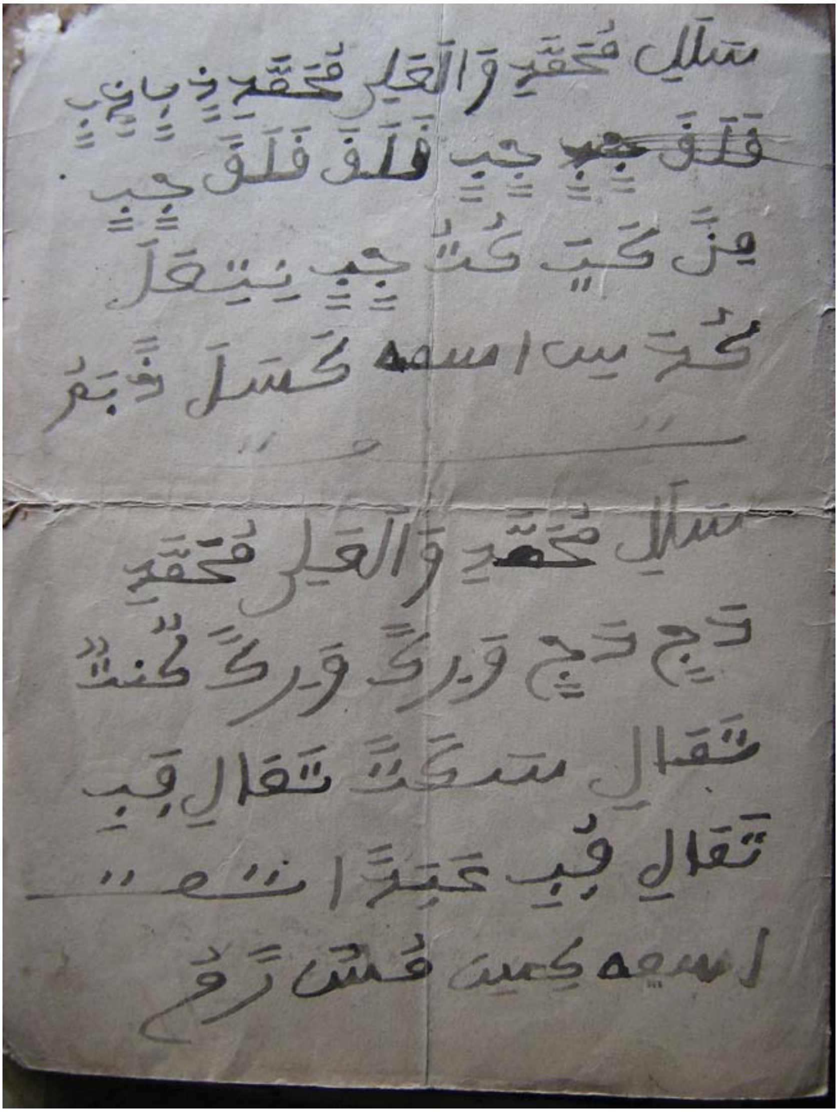


Fig. 2: Mandinka hunters' incantations (texts 2 and 3)

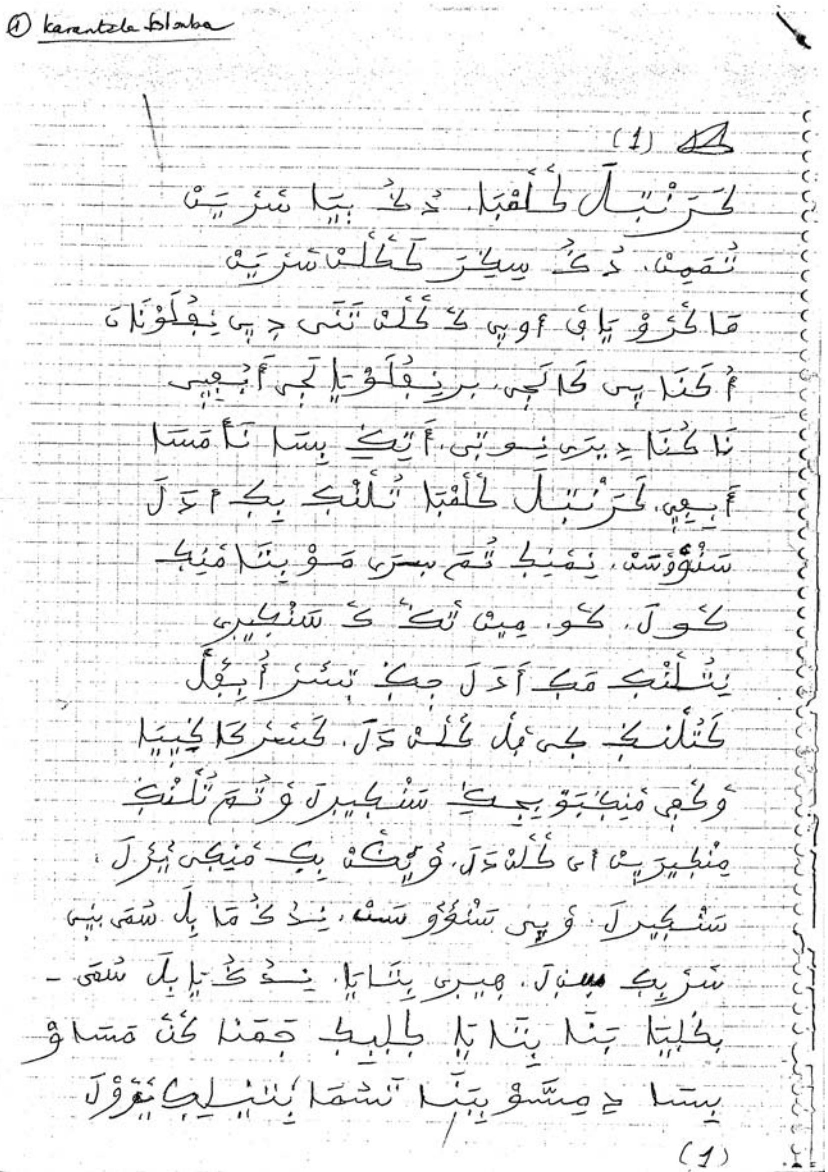


Fig. 3: Bamana text 1: The sacred well of San

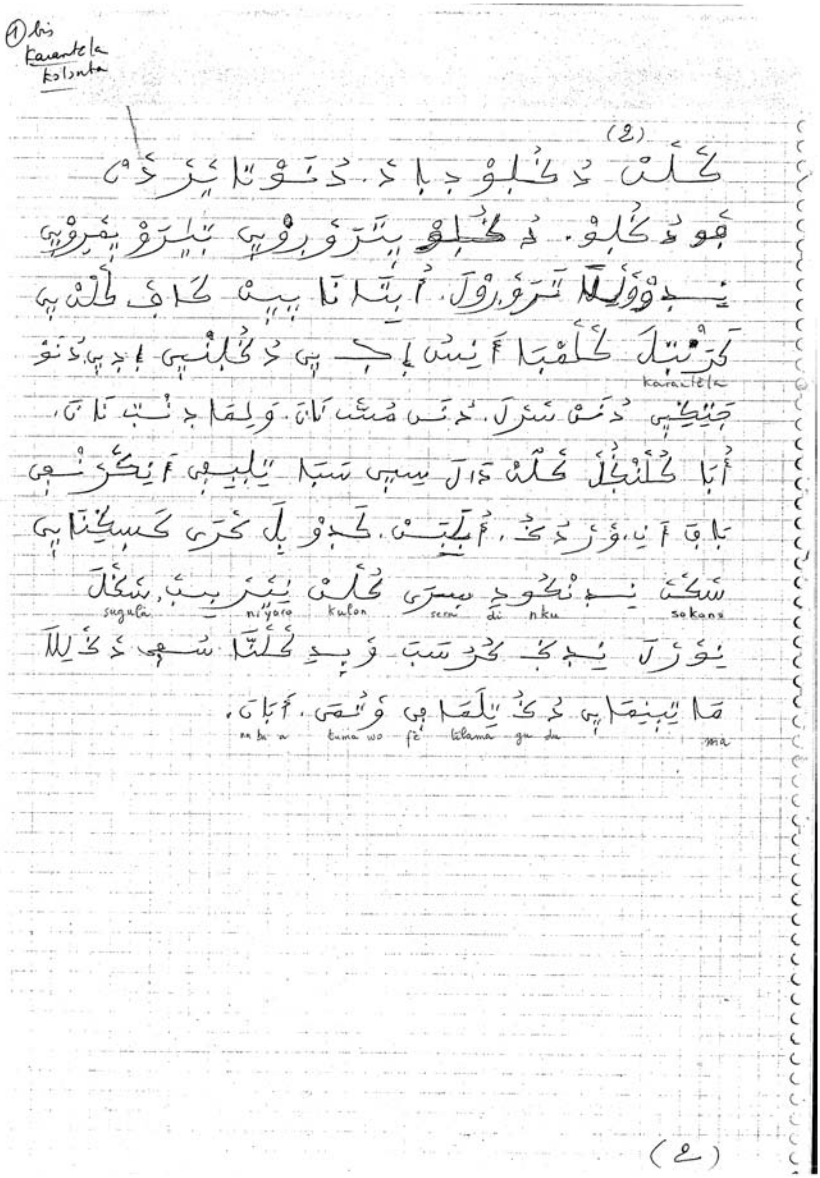


Fig. 4: Bamana text 1, page 2: The sacred well of San

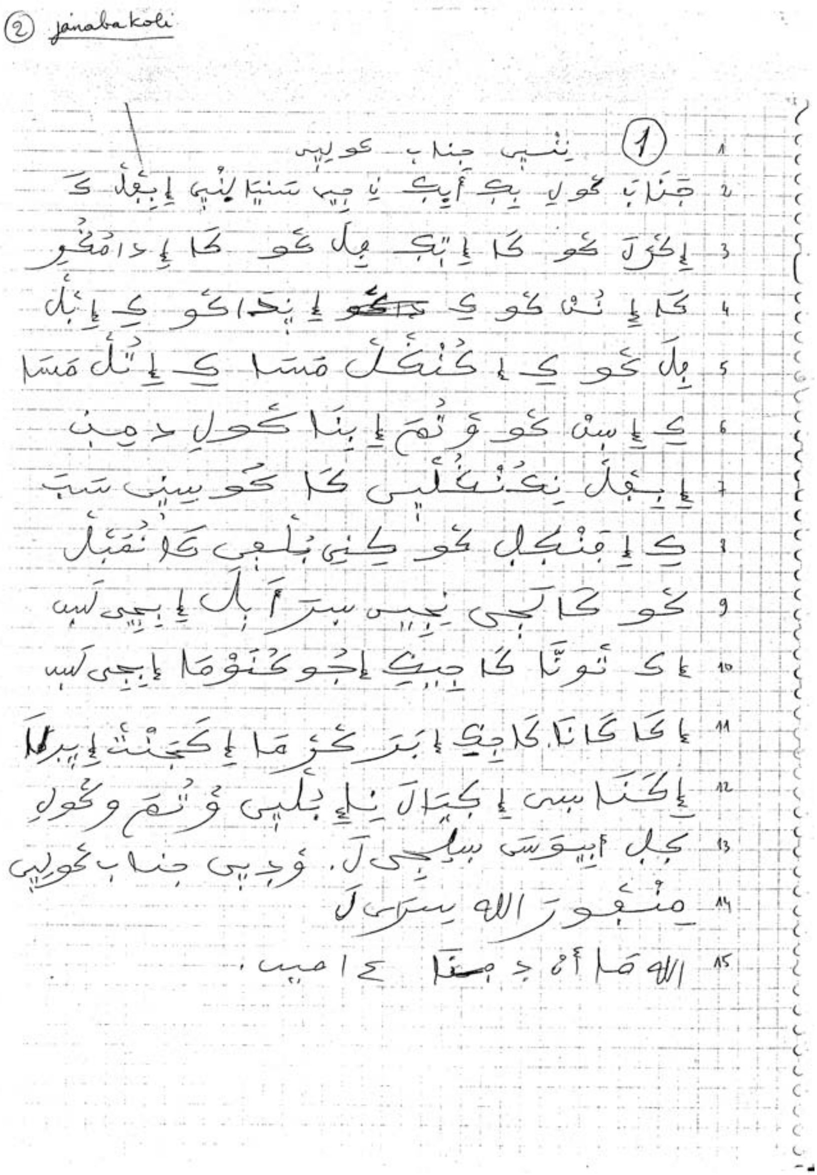


Fig. 5: Bamana text 2: Ablutions

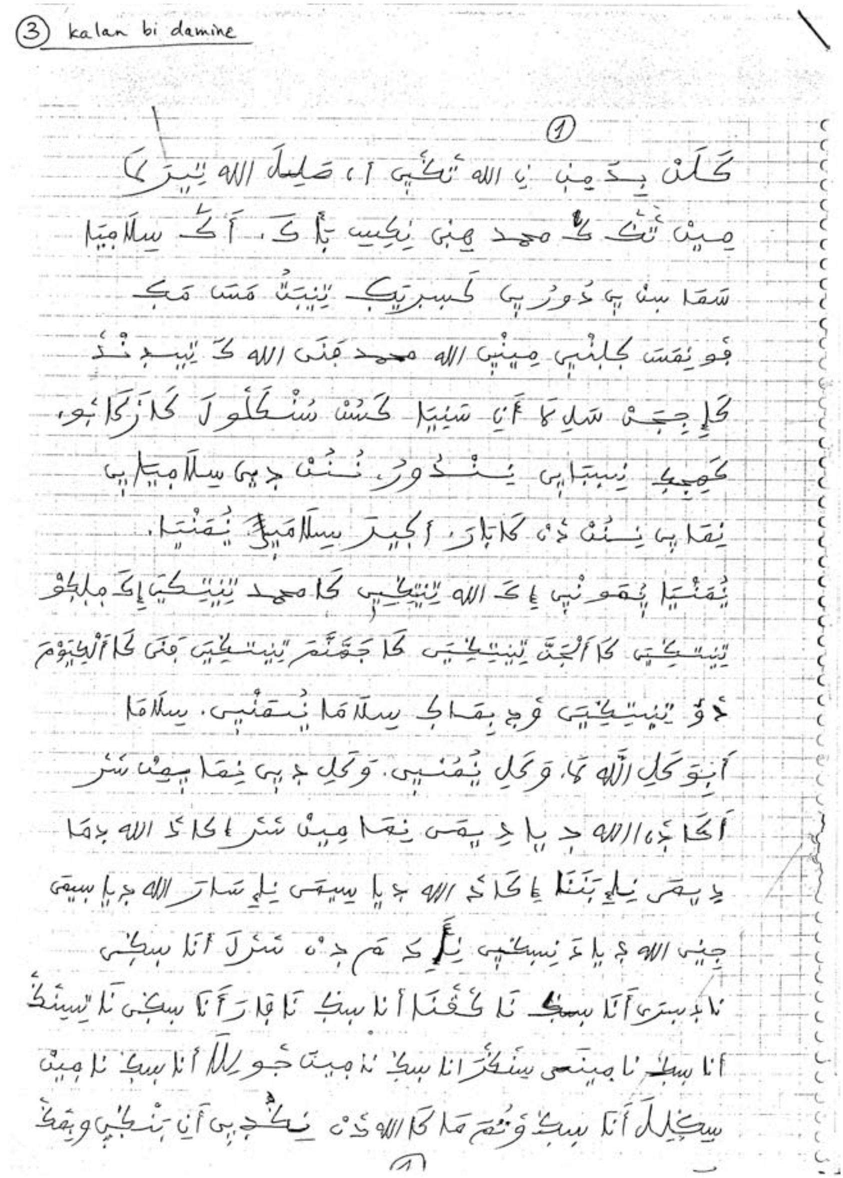


Fig. 6: Bamana text 3: Islamic learning

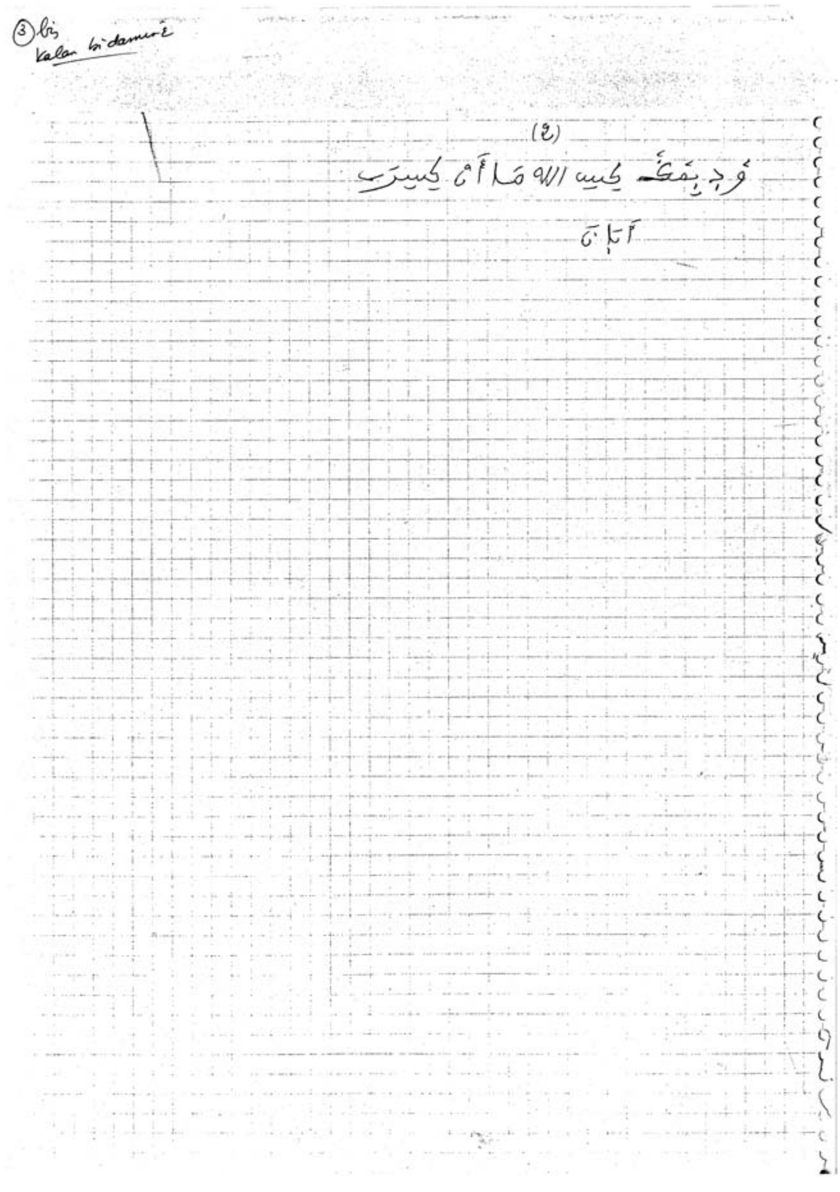


Fig. 7: Bamana text 3, page 2: Islamic learning

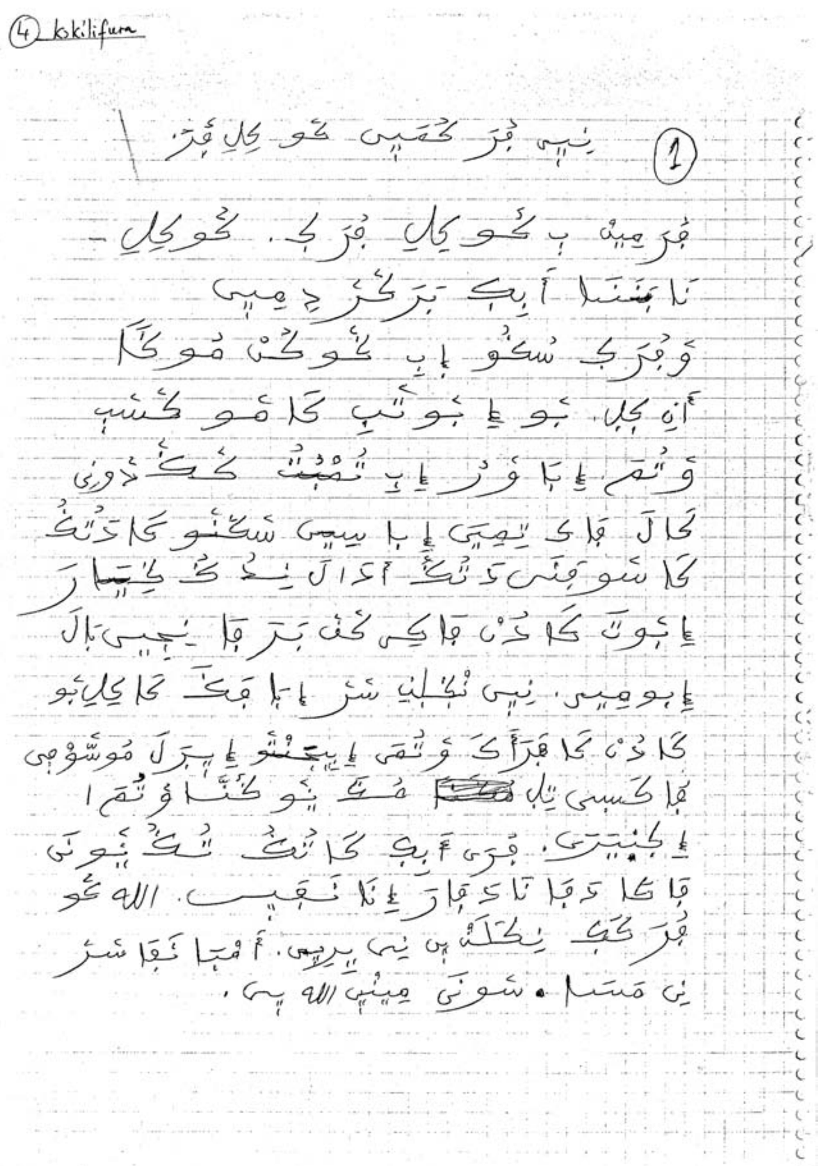


Fig. 8: Bamana text 4: A hernia medicine

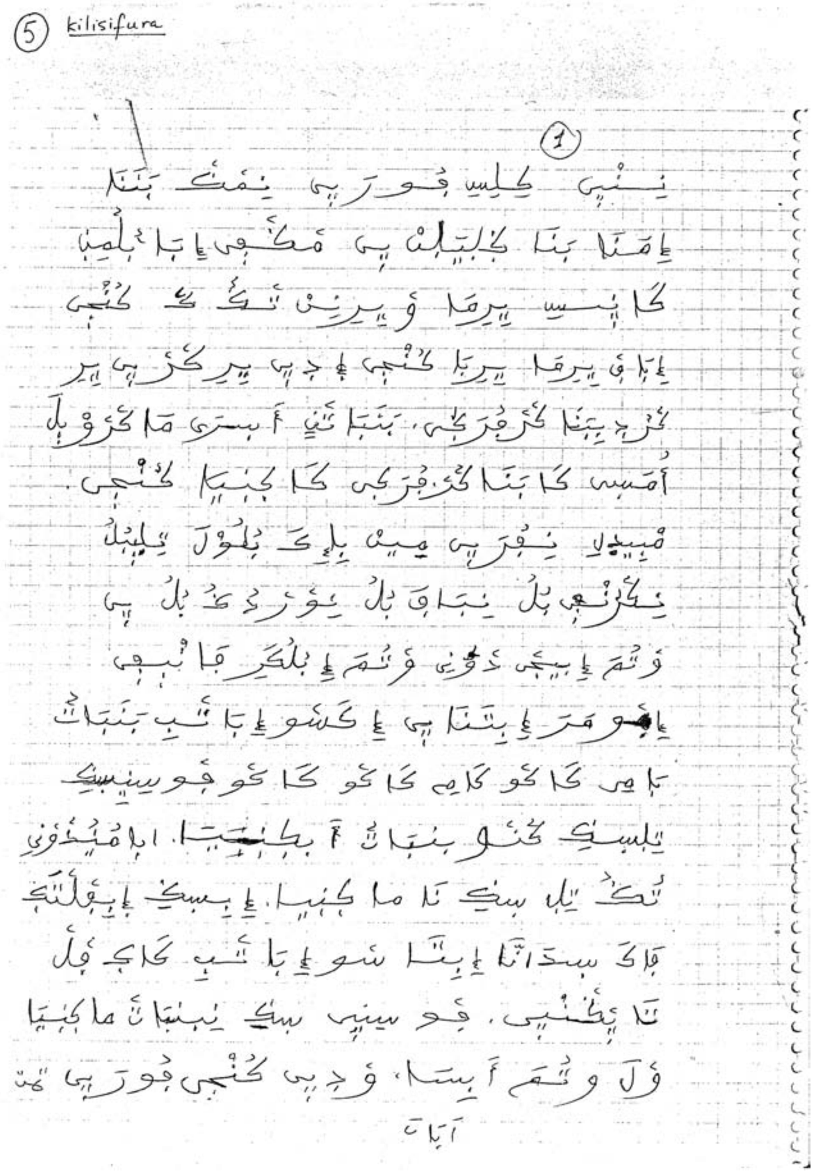


Fig. 9: Bamana text 5: Incantation medicine

WEST AFRICAN SCRIPTS AND ARABIC-SCRIPT ORTHOGRAPHIES IN SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXT

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A stretch of the Sahel between the Mossi and Jula in the west and the Sango and Maba in the east is home to the highest concentration of distinct linguistic communities in Africa, dominated however by three major regional languages—Hausa, Fulfulde and Chadian Arabic.[1] These three languages share geography, having overlapping spheres of influence; but they differ in genetics, coming as they do from three different linguistic families (Chadic, Niger-Congo and Semitic respectively). They share certain features of distribution, all having a high proportion of second-language to first-language speakers (Hausa 18:25 million centred in Nigeria, Fulfulde 2:2 million in Cameroon, Chadian Arabic 2:1 million centred in Chad),[2] and national status, being spoken by large proportions of their host countries' populations (Hausa 25% in Nigeria and 80% in Niger, Fulfulde 20% in Cameroon and 8% in Nigeria, Chadian Arabic 50% in Chad), but they differ greatly in demographics from the massive Hausa urban centres to the *Mbororo* or 'cattle Fulani' and Shuwa Arab nomads. They share strong historic, cultural and linguistic associations with Islam, but have distinctive histories of engagement with the internal (Sufi/Sunni) and external (Westernization/Arabization) dynamics of this association. Most importantly for this paper, and closely related to all the above other factors, they have in common strong centuries-old traditions of Arabic-script writing which have gradually given way since the early 20th century to Roman-script traditions promoted by Western educational systems and Christian missionaries (so much so, in fact, that in Nigeria and Cameroon today, official literacy statistics relate only to Roman-script literacy, completely disregarding competence with Arabic script), but they each have distinctive sociolinguistic and technical challenges in the 21st century.

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[1] ISO language codes [hau]; [fuv], [fub] etc. (Fulfulde is considered for our purposes here as one language); and [shu].

[2] Figures are approximations. Second-language speakers' varieties may be deprecated (e.g. 'Middle-belt Hausa', 'Bongor Arabic').

This research has sprung out of work with language development and Bible translation projects in these and other languages, and related contacts and consultations in Nigeria, Niger, Chad, and Cameroon with government departments of literacy and national-language promotion (DAPLAN and the like), ISESCO, SIL International, JCMWA, the Roman Catholic Church and various Christian missionaries.[3] In contrast to much of the work done on the use of Arabic script in Africa, the focus here is not historical, but on contemporary conventions and developments, and tendencies in the scholarly development of practical Arabic-script orthographies (often with outside consultancy or even outside initiation). And whilst modern Arabic-script publishing in Hausa is very firmly grounded in old and continuous traditions, Fulfulde has history but little continuity (because most modern publishing is done by NGOs and Christian missionaries), and Chadian Arabic is only now coming into its own alongside Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) thanks to the combined efforts of government departments, NGOs and both Muslim and Christian agencies. After a broad sociolinguistic survey of the concurrent use of Arabic and Roman scripts, we look in more detail at technical issues of orthographic variation and norms.

1. Scripts and Society, Digraphia and Dissent

In addition to the extensive regional use of Arabic itself, Arabic-script or أَعْجَمِي *ʾaʿjamī* literary traditions existed in the 19th century for languages in all three phyla of the region, Afroasiatic (e.g. Hausa), Niger-Congo (e.g. Fulfulde, Yoruba), and Nilo-Saharan (e.g. Kanuri, Songhai). And of course the use of Arabic script had little ideological importance until the arrival of a major competitor with colonial administration (pre-colonial Christian missionaries and scholars had used Arabic script, Philips 2000). But European colonialists' imposition of Roman script from around 1900 was probably in most cases not intended as anti-Islamic. Other African scripts were equally opposed, such as the Old Bamum script of Sultan Njoya in Foumban, Cameroon, suppressed in the 1930s by French colonial authorities (Roger Blench, p. c.), and the various Fulfulde 'secret scripts'. In fact, in Nigeria, the British High Commissioner Frederick Lord Lugard, who, though terribly poorly informed, contributed most to the Romanization of Hausa literacy, is

[3] Warren-Rothlin (2009, 2011, 2012) presents a preliminary survey, with some implications drawn for Bible agencies.

also well known to have affirmed the use of Arabic (in Bornu Province, even as a regional language!) and to have protected Hausaland and the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria in general from Christian missionary incursions (Philips 2000, ch. 3).[4] His policy is colourfully described by one commentator:

> La politique de Lugard, qui se méfiait des évolués [he particularly disliked educated southerners], s'est efforcée de maintenir les fiers cavaliers hausa et fulbé dans leurs traditions féodales le plus possible.[5] (Cuoq 1975: 252)

In Lugard's own words, and rather more positively:

> I hope that, in course of time, this [Romanising policy] may result in the formation of a class of people who can read and write Hausa in the Roman character, though unable to speak English. (quoted in Philips 2000: 33)

This was all, of course, British 'indirect rule', and a far cry from French colonial policies of *assimilation*. In Chad, Lugard's contemporary Gérard, Commandant of Abéché, famously responsible for an appalling mass execution of twenty-five Islamic scholars in 1916, "[…] était un anti-féodal […] le geste de Gérard visait la féodalité ouaddaïenne bien plus que les chefs religieux comme tels" (Coudray 1998b: 225; similarly Coudray 1998a: 24–25; Lanne 1998a: 165–166).[6] What we see from these two cases is that early colonial approaches to administration, social structure and education may not have been specifically directed against Islam itself. However, these two cases ultimately set the tone for the Roman-script/Arabic-script debates in Nigeria and Chad respectively, and established the fault-line as largely religious—as Coudray says, "on ne peut pas empêcher qu'une lecture religieuse soit faite" (Coudray 1998b: 225).[7]

In his *Clash of Civilizations*, Samuel Huntington refers to language and religion as 'the central elements of any culture or civilization', and the primary factors in the formation of socio-cultural macro-blocs (Huntington 1996: 59–66). However, history tells us that scripts, such as Roman, Arabic, Cyrillic and Chinese, are yet more powerful than languages. Scripts divide

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[4] Note, however, a disparaging comment by Lugard about "Arabic Mohammadan progress" (Philips 2000: 33).

[5] "Lugard mistrusted those who had adopted European culture and education, and pursued a policy aimed at keeping the proud Hausa and Fulani horsemen as much as possible within their feudal traditions" [Translations are my own.]

[6] "… was an anti-feudalist … Gérard's action was not so much targeted at the religious leaders as such, as it was at the Ouaddai feudal system".

[7] "One cannot prevent this being read in religious terms".

languages into cultures, make dialects into new distinct languages,[8] and create new dialects (since the use of a particular script is usually closely related to the acceptance of a particular body of loanwords). And digraphia, the coexistence of two scripts for the same language, has been described as typically "an outer and visible sign of ethnic or religious hatred"[9] (Collin 2005: 6, citing King 2001: 10). Thus:

- Arabic was written in mediaeval Europe by Muslims in Arabic script, by Christians in Roman script and by Jews in Hebrew script
- Hindi-Urdu is written by Indian Hindus in Devanagari script and by Pakistani Muslims in Arabic script (Ahmad 2008)
- Serbo-Croat is written by Eastern Orthodox Serbs in Cyrillic script, by Roman Catholic Croats in Roman script and by Muslim Bosnians—at least until the early 20th century—in Arabic script (Collin 2005)

Conversely, scripts unite cultures even in the presence of many languages:

- Hebrew script has been maintained by Jews throughout all their travels in Aramaic (where they got it from), Hebrew, Arabic, Yiddish and Ladino
- Arabic script has been shared by Muslims everywhere from Mozarabic (Spanish) and Wolofal in the west, to Indonesian in the east
- ... and lest the discussion become too ethnocentric, we should note that Roman script has been held to equally tenaciously by Western Europeans (though perhaps not for quite the same kind of ideological reasons)

Digraphia is a common feature of African Ajami situations, usually involving Arabic and Roman scripts, as in the three cases under discussion here. Government and NGO publications, commercial signboards and adverts, and religious literature (translations of scriptures, apologetic and devotional guides) may exist in both Arabic and Roman scripts, largely to serve Islamic and 'Christian' communities respectively. And the 'fault line' is much more than just functional. For most English or French readers from 'Christian' communities, seeing كوكا كولا ⟨kwk' kwl'⟩ 'Coca-Cola', written in Arabic script

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[8] If, as is often said, 'A language is a dialect with an army and navy', how much more is it 'a dialect with a distinct script'!

[9] The form of the expression alludes to the traditional definition of a sacrament, particularly pertinent since Collin is referring to "the Roman and the Cyrillic alphabets, which have traditionally provided the fault line between Europe's Roman Catholic and Orthodox Christian communities".

represents a significant clash of ideologies. But to many literate Fulani, Roman script is *karfeeje kefeero* 'pagan writing', and to many Hausas, it is the *boko* 'Roman script' (and hence 'Western education' in general) of the '*Boko Haram*' movement (properly *Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad*). Within such communities, Arabic script is so highly revered that a Cameroonian Muslim woman recently reportedly memorized a Fulfulde AIDS leaflet simply because it was written in Arabic script (Scott Clark, p. c.)! The use of Arabic script is for many West African Muslims an indispensible connection of their culture to the *ʾumma*, the international Islamic community, and recent suggestions by the Federal Government of Nigeria that even Islamic schools should be required to include English in their curricula have been taken as a threat to Arabic-script and Arabic-language literacy and hence to Islam itself.[10]

> Jews in 19th-century France had a saying to describe the decline of spiritual ardor over the generations: 'The grandfather prays in Hebrew, the father reads the prayers in French, the son does not pray at all.' (Yancey 2000: 198)

West African 'Christian' communities will not, of course, have anything like the same attachment to a particular language as have Muslims or Jews, but they may be equally attached as they are to a particular script, and the promotion of mother-tongue literacy in Roman script may be felt by some in Nigeria's Middle Belt as a way to resist *šarīʿa*.

However, the above is only one side of the coin—the highly polarized, ideological side characteristic of modern Nigeria. The history of Arabic script use for African languages across the region tells a rather different story, and the 20th century was in fact marked by

> [...] the ambivalent attitude of African Muslims towards Arabic as a sacred script. Clergy did not encourage its secular use. They wrote their compositions in stilted Arabic and vernacular writing in Arabic script tended to be mainly for secular usage such as commercial correspondence. Thus there was no stimulus to compose in one's own language. (Trimingham 1980: 101–102)

Even today, several Islamic communities in northern Niger and Chad are rejecting Arabic script for their languages as an Arab cultural symbol, and prefer Roman script as culturally neutral and 'international'.

Of all the languages in the region, Hausa has had by far the largest body of literature in modern times. Nigeria has a notoriously difficult divide

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[10] See the strong comments by the deputy leader of Izāla in the Hausa-language newspaper, *Gaskiya ta fi Kwabo*, 1–4 April 2010.

between the Islamic, *šarīʿa*, mother-tongue-Hausa north, and the mixed Islamic-'Christian'-Traditionalist, Federal-law, second-language-Hausa Middle Belt. But government Romanizing policy since Lugard has resulted in a large secular and Islamic Roman-script Hausa literature (quite apart from any Christian missionary involvement), including even two full translations of the Qurʾān (Gumi 1980; Agboola 1992),[11] such that even in the north, Arabic-script Hausa has been largely relegated to two principal contexts—the Naira (₦), and religious materials produced by the Tijāniyya Sufi order in Kano (including partial interlinear Qurʾān translations):[12]

Arabic-script Hausa appeared alongside English on Nigerian currency right up to the new ₦1,000 note introduced in 2006,[13] but the new plasticised ₦20 and ₦50 notes introduced in March 2007 (and the new ₦10 note subsequently) bear English, Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa, all in Roman script. This represents a shift to a national language policy known as *wazobia*,[14] which is being followed not only by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), but also in Nokia phone interfaces, Linux computer operating systems,[15] and the directions for use with some commonly-available packet foodstuffs. The CBN received sharp criticism for this move, coming as it did without

[11] The meaning of the Qurʾān has been translated into over sixty world languages, nearly all of these in Roman script, even in digraphic contexts where an Arabic script edition might have been viable. Some early translations (by Christian missionaries!) did not sell well: "Certainly the most notable literary production [of CMS missionaries] was the Yoruba translation of the *Qurʾān* by the Rev. (later Canon) M.S. Cole, which was indeed a feat. These works, however, found little favour with those for whom they were meant. Even the Yoruba *Qurʾān* moved, right down to 1908, 'very slowly' among the Muslims" (Gbadamosi 1978: 130). But the several editions of Gumi's Hausa translation and of Al-Farsy's Swahili have been very widely distributed and accepted. The only Arabic-script Qurʾān translation I am aware of in sub-Saharan Africa is one which appeared recently in Wolofal.

[12] Other minor uses of Arabic script for Hausa include commercial products (e.g. بَ غِيَ بَ ⟨ba ġiya ba⟩ *ba giya ba* 'non-alcoholic' on Royal Malt, and the 'Arewa' series of school exercise books), mute beggars' writing boards, institutional signboards, and personal letters.

[13] An orthography based on Ḥafṣ/MSA conventions with some internationally-accepted modifications and additions was used in the colonial period (e.g. نُصْف پَنّي ⟨nuṣ^{0}f b$_1$an^{2}iy⟩ *nuṣf pannī* 'one halfpenny' 1939, 1959), a Warš orthography with local additions after independence (e.g. فَمْ طَيا ⟨f$_1$am^0 ṭaya'⟩ *fam ɗayā* 'one pound' under the Central Bank of Nigeria) and some inconsistencies more recently (e.g. in the writing of Naira: نَيْرَ ⟨nay^{0}ra⟩ until 2005, and ⟨نَيْرَا⟩ ⟨nay^{0}raʾ⟩ on the ₦1,000 note in 2006).

[14] The term *wazobia* is derived from the word for 'to come' in each of the three major national languages and is an important symbol of national unity. Though originally the name of an artificially-created composite language (Nigeria's Esperanto), it has come to be used for any national-level initiative based on these three largest languages.

[15] Microsoft Windows tags the Hausa language as '(Latin, Nigeria)', at least implying the existence of a non-Roman-script alternative.

significant public consultation. Muslims naturally took it as anti-Islamic, whilst a number of prominent 'Christians' were widely quoted as being in favour, on the basis that Arabic (for which they had mistaken the Arabic-script Hausa) was a 'foreign language'.[16] Nevertheless, the battle appears to be substantially over, and a majority of Muslims seem to be ready to resign Arabic-script Hausa to history and retreat to the Arabic language itself, just as many 'Christians' are deserting their own Nigerian languages for English. Such a polarization is of course far from the Roman-script *wazobia* hopes of either Lugard or the CBN![17]

As for religious movements, Kano is home to the Arabic-script Hausa أَلْفِجِر *Al-Fijir* newspaper and the vast production, especially by the Tijāniyya, of small religious pamphlets in handwritten Warš-style, *maġribī*-script Hausa (also Fulfulde) containing the 99 names of Allah, collections of *ḥadīṯ*, theology, history, songs, and instructions on the use of amulets. This remains a strong movement—these pamphlets (also produced in Zaria, Sokoto and doubtless elsewhere too) can be found for sale outside almost any mosque throughout the region, and the face of the Tijāniyya leader, Sheikh Ibrahim Niass, is equally ubiquitous on car stickers. However the powerful rise of Wahhābism, starting with Abubakar Gumi's attempt in 1962 to turn the Sardauna of Sokoto against Sheikh Niass, and then his founding in 1978 of the *Jama'atu Izalat al-Bid'a wa Iqamat al-Sunna* or 'Izala' movement (Umar 1993), has resulted in a general shift towards Arabic, the Imam Ḥafṣ edition of the Qur'ān, and more internationally standard font faces. Even the most recent, high-quality Kano publications have gone in this direction.[18]

Thus the use of Arabic script in the region is subject to a wide range of internal and external factors. Arabic itself appears everywhere, on the labels of imported food products from Lebanon (especially to Nigeria) or Egypt (especially to Chad), the subtitles to American films (on the Middle Eastern cable networks, which are undercutting their South African counterparts), AIDS education notices in Chad westwards to Maiduguri, and of course in

[16] "Is it incidental that the other language on our national currency is Arabic?" (Professor Wole Soyinka, October 16, 1998, http://allafrica.com/stories/200703070575.html).

[17] "in the second half of the twentieth century, usage of Arabic as a literary language and as a general language of written communication has become more widespread, even as literacy in English or in certain African languages has increased … The use of Arabic as a literary and scholarly language has a historical depth of over five centuries and shows no sign of diminishing. The ratio of Muslims to non-Muslims in Nigeria continues to increase and hence education in Arabic and Arabic writing skills are likely to expand" (Hunwick 1997).

[18] فَسَّرَرْ لِتَّافِنْ عِشْرِينِيَا *Fassarar littāfin ashrīniya*; فَسَّرَرْ دِيوَانِ نَ بِيُو دَ هَوْسَ *Fassarar Diwāni na biyu da Ḥausa*.


الحديث الحادي عشر

عن ابي محمد الحسن بن علي بن ابي طالب سبط رسول الله
صلى الله عليه وسلم وريحانته رضي الله عنهما قال حفظت
من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم دع ما يريبك الى ما لا
يريبك رواه الترمذي والنسائي وقال الترمذي حديث حسن صحيح

الحديث الثاني عشر

عن ابي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى
الله عليه وسلم من حسن اسلام المرء تركه ما لا يعنيه
حديث حسن رواه الترمذي وغيره هكذا

الحديث الثالث عشر

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عن ابي

Figure 1: A page from the *Forty Ḥadīṯ* in *maġribī* script and Warš orthography, with interlinear translation in Arabic-script Hausa, printed in Kano.

a host of Islamic religious contexts, including, increasingly, signs put up by the Sharia Commission and the Nasrul llahi il-fathi Society of Nigeria (NASFAT). And the status of Arabic will continue to shift under the influence of the tides of international relations and related trends in importation of educational materials and household and food products, as well as national ethnic demographics relating to urbanization, *šarīʿa*, and control of resources. However, the status of Arabic-script Hausa and Fulfulde may have become, in Nigeria at least, a matter internal to the Muslim community, as the traditional Tijāniyya and modern Izala movements vie for position.

2. Orthographies and Standards

When Roman script is used for languages other than Latin, modifications are made to represent new sounds and to make new distinctions. Some basic modifications and diacritics introduced in the Middle Ages are used by all European languages (e.g. *i, j*),[19] and these may be supplemented with:

- other diacritics, e.g. in Europe *é, è, â, ü, å, ñ*; in West Africa *ẹ, ọ, ẽ, á, è, î, ǒ, ū*
- special characters, e.g. in Europe *ß, ð*; in West Africa *ɛ, ɔ, ə, ɓ, ɗ, ƙ, ŋ, ɲ*
- digraphs, trigraphs or even quadrigraphs, e.g. in Europe *ch, th, wh, gh, ng, qu, sch, tsch*; in West Africa *kp, gb, ɓɗ, hw, hyw, thl, mthl*
- special uses of existing characters, e.g. ⟨j⟩ in English for /d͜ʒ/, in French for /ʒ/ and in German for /j/; ⟨c⟩ in Hausa for /t͜ʃ/

Given this range of alternatives, it is common in the region under consideration here for one language to have multiple Roman-script orthographies—for example, when a cross-border language follows both Francophone (e.g. *ch, r, é, è*) and Anglophone (*sh, gh, e, ɛ*) conventions, or when -ATR vowels are marked by one community with subscript dots (*ẹ ị ọ ụ*) and by another with special characters (*ɛ ɩ ɔ ʋ*). Technology may of course have an important part to play here too, since old typewriters only allowed limited diacritics (e.g. *ẹ, ḳ, ʼy*), whilst computers, especially now with Unicode, allow more

[19] "the medieval i originally had no dot but acquired one because the letter as a hatless stroke was hard to distinguish on a crowded page of handwriting … Another way in which the medieval writers solved the 'i-legibility' problem was to substitute a minuscule letter y, as it was easier to read. Thus, 'his' might be spelled as 'hys', for example" (Sacks 2003: 175).

sophisticated solutions (ɛ, ƙ, ƴ); ironically, the most modern and most widely used special technology is the most limiting—SMS text-messaging!

Similarly, when Ethiopic script (an *abugida* or *alphasyllabary*) is used for languages other than Geʿez, modifications include:

- use of the *o*-vowel-sign to mark labialization of velars (e.g. ሎ /lo/ cf. ኰ /kw/; labialization and the *o*-vowel cannot co-occur)
- use of a superscript bar to mark palatalization of alveolars (e.g. ሰ /s/ > ሸ /ʃ/), nasalization of velars (e.g. ገ /g/ > ፕ /ŋ/ in Tigre and Blin) and affrication of plosives (e.g. ከ /k/ > ኸ /x/ in Amharic and Tigrinya)

Similarly again, when Arabic script is used for languages other than Arabic, modifications are made to represent new sounds and make new distinctions. The most basic diacritics were introduced in the 8th–9th centuries (*nuqaṭ*, dots to distinguish letters with the same form, e.g. ب /b/, ت /t/, ث /θ/, and *ḥarakāt*, vowel signs derived from consonant signs َ /a/ (from *ʾalif*), ِ /i/ (from *yāʾ*), ُ /u/ (from *wāw*), and these may be supplemented with:

- further *nuqaṭ* on consonants: used in Asia from as early as the 8th century, e.g. Persian پ /p/, چ /tʃ/, ژ /ʒ/, گ /g/; Urdu ڤ /f/; Sindhi ٻ /b/, ڃ /ɲ/, ڄ /dʒ/; Kazakh ۋ /v/; Pashto ې /e/; Hassaniya ݣ or ڨ /g/; Hausa ٻ /ɓ/, ۻ /s'/, ۑ /ʔʲ/ or /ʃ/; *Alphabet National du Tchad* ڃ /ʔʲ/ or /ʃ/
- special characters: Urdu ے (a sign known as *yeh barree*); the Warš Arabic orthography's subscript dot /e/ known as *ʾimāla*; Maghrebi script's special forms for ء, د, ه, ح and various final forms
- digraphs or trigraphs: أي ⟨a'y⟩ /aːʲ/ or /eː/, أو ⟨a'w⟩ /aːʷ/ or /oː/; Urdu ھ for consonantal aspiration /ʰ/; Hausa ِىٓ ⟨eᵃy₁⟩ /eː/, ُو ⟨uw⟩ /o/; تش ⟨tš⟩ /tʃ/ as in تشاد ⟨tš'd⟩ /tʃaːd/ 'Chad' (though the *Alphabet National du Tchad* prescribes چ /tʃ/). In the case of consonants, these may often appear in ligatures: *Alphabet National du Tchad* ݝ /ŋ/ (ن ⟨n⟩ + غ ⟨ġ⟩), ݧ /ɲ/ (ن ⟨n⟩ + ي ⟨y⟩), ݦ /ᵐb/ (م ⟨m⟩ + ب ⟨b⟩)
- special uses of existing characters: ي /eː/; Hausa ق /k'/, ث /tʃ/, ط /ɗ/; Chinese ۼ for nasalization /˜/
- broader uses of existing characters (removing phonetic distinctions): ب /b/ or /p/, ف /f/ or /p/ or /v/, ش /ʃ/ or /tʃ/ or /ʒ/, ج /dʒ/ or /g/, ق /q/ or /g/, ص /sˤ/ or /s/, ط /tˤ/ or /t/. This strategy is typical of the names of commercial products. However, it under-represents, so that one may read بمبرز ⟨bmbrz⟩ 'Pampers (a brand of diapers)' as /pamparz/ or /bambarz/, and كوست ⟨kwst⟩ 'Coast (a brand of milk powder)' as English *Coast* /kost/, *Cost* /kɔst/ (و marks this /ɔ/ sound in

> *Foster Clark's*) or *Coust* /kust/ (as و for the /u/ in *Blue Plate*). It is also highly inconsistent in this region, where products come from all over the world (e.g. 'vitamins' ڤيتامينات ⟨$f_2$yt'myn't⟩ /viːtaːmiːnaːt/ or فيتامينات ⟨fyt'myn't⟩ /fiːtaːmiːnaːt/; 'vanilla' ڢانيلا ⟨f_1'nyl'⟩ /faːniːlaː/ or ونيليا ⟨wnyly'⟩ /waniːliːaː/; 'gram' گرام ⟨k_1r'm⟩ /graːm/ or غرام ⟨ġr'm⟩ /ɣraːm/ or جرام ⟨ǧr'm⟩ /d͜ʒraːm/). These features clearly make this approach unsuitable for the use of Arabic script for a whole language, especially where there may be limited word recognition, and especially for Muslim and Christian religious texts containing many unknown concepts and names.

As with Roman script, given this range of alternatives, it is common in the region under consideration here for one language to have multiple Arabic-script orthographies, distinguished along regional or sectarian lines, and/or by access to writing technology.

Most notable is the traditional West African Tijāniyya preference for Warš orthography in *maġribī*-style script as against the modern international Sunni preference for Ḥafṣ (or Modern Standard Arabic) orthography in *mašriqī nasḫī*-style script (Brockett 1988; Brenner & Last 1985: 443, n. 1). The existence of these two orthographic traditions is of ancient origin—Imams Warš (d. 812) and Ḥafṣ (d. 796) were among the 8th–9th-century *ruwāt* 'transmitters', who recorded *al-qirā'āt as-sab*ʿ 'the Seven Readings', with their distinct systems of diacritics and punctuation.[20] The Warš orthography differs from Ḥafṣ/Modern Standard Arabic in its placing of *nuqaṭ* on ڢ *fā'* and ڧ *qāf*, its lack of diacritics on word-final forms such as ڡ /f/, ٯ /q/, ں /n/, ک /k/ and ى /j/, the use of a large subscript (traditionally red) dot to mark the *'imāla* 'umlauting' (also known as *ʿarj* 'twisting') of an /a/-vowel to /e/ (usually in the form بى ⟨-$e^a y_1$⟩) (Brockett 1988: 33; Wright 1896: 10), and preferences for omitting *šadda* and lengthening final vowels. Warš Qur'āns are available throughout the region, typically produced by the Tijāniyya (or Qādiriyya) religious brotherhoods, and always handwritten in the same style of *maġribī* script as is used by the *almajirai* or Sufi 'disciples' on their writing-boards.

The existence of these two well-known orthographies would not have been a problem in itself. But the development of Ajami has suffered greatly from the absence of local standards for supplementation of these orthographies. For Hausa,

20 The Hebrew Bible similarly has Tiberian and Palestinian vocalization systems, and a *ketib* 'written'/*qere* 'read' distinction, indicating distinct layers of tradition.

> […] there has never been a standardized Ajami orthography. Different innovations were made and used in different places, and scholars were free to use or ignore the innovations of other scholars as they saw fit.
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> (Philips 2000: 21; similarly Yahaya 1988: 13–35; Zima 1969: 216–217 was much more optimistic)

Similarly for Chadian Arabic,

> […] le texte écrit reste souvent difficilement lisible par un autre, parce que le choix de certains symboles utilisés est laissé au libre arbitre du scribe.[21]
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> (de Pommerol 1997: 120)

In the case of Yoruba it has even been suggested that the lack of standards was to blame for the poor development of Ajami:

> … at least in the late 1850s, the Yoruba scholars were making efforts to write the Yoruba language in Arabic characters [footnote 127: citing Meakin, CMS, 1858]. These efforts were single-handed and scattered, unlike the Christian attempt at about the same time. The result of the Muslim effort was the production of writings little understood [footnote 129: This is what the Yoruba call *anjẹmi* (Arabic: *Aʿjamī*). There is a Yoruba saying popular particularly among the Muslims that the Yoruba-Arabic (anjẹmi) is intelligible only to the writer (Yoruba: 'Alanjẹmi ni anjẹmi nye').] by other Yoruba mallams, who invariably had their dialects to transliterate into Arabic. Their efforts, therefore, proved largely futile. This was a sad example of the effect of over-localised and unorganised independent struggle and development of Islam in Yorubaland.
>
> (Gbadamosi 1978: 37)

Today, a number of orthographies for Hausa, Fulfulde, Chadian Arabic and other languages are being promoted by NGOs, Christian missionary agencies and even academic institutions, including the *Société africaine d'éducation et de formation pour le développement* (SAFEFOD) in Senegal, the *Association pour la promotion de l'élevage au Sahel et en Savanne* (APESS) in Burkina Faso, members of SIL's Fulfulde Harmonisation Project (FHP) and Joint Christian Ministries in West Africa/*Ministère chrétien commun en Afrique de l'Ouest* (JCMWA/MICCAO) across the region and the *Institut nationale des langues et civilisations orientales* (INALCO) in Paris. However, it is questionable whether such a large number of independent players is really helping West African language communities to work together. Certain non-Arabic sounds such as those typically represented in Roman script by *ɓ, ƴ, ng, ny, p, ch, zh, e, o* etc. are written in many different ways across the region, some-

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[21] "The written text is often difficult for anyone else to read because the choice of the symbols used is left to the personal preference of the scribe".

times for the same language, and often for neighbouring, overlapping or cognate languages.

Francophone governments usually have a *Direction de la promotion des langues nationales* (DAPLAN) or similar, one goal of which is the fixing of a national alphabet in both Roman and Arabic script, and for the latter, they typically relate closely with the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO),[22] which has worked at establishing standards and providing the technology (typewriters) to follow them. In January 2009, I was invited by Chad's DAPLAN to give consultative input, alongside representatives of ISESCO and SIL International, at a workshop towards the establishment of an Arabic-script national alphabet to parallel that which had already been approved for Roman script. The result has since been signed into law, and will now doubtless help to prevent excessive inconsistency between Chadian languages. However, such collaborative projects are always costly to all partners, and this *Alphabet national du Tchad* (*version arabe*) corresponds fully with neither ISESCO's vision for equivalence with Modern Standard Arabic, nor existing Hausa and Fulfulde traditions, nor widespread modern conventions in neighbouring countries, nor the carefully worked-out practice of SIL International's literacy projects, and in an attempt to be comprehensive, it includes extraordinary Arabic-script adaptations and ligatures for sounds which only exist in southern languages which are unlikely to ever be written in Arabic script (see Table 7 below).

Lugard claimed that Arabic script was ill-suited to writing African languages (Philips 2000: 33), and even more recent commentators have said the same:

> Arabic had stimulated Africans to write their own languages, but the effect of the West has been to spread the usage of the Latin script and it has all but substituted itself in the writing of Hausa and Swahili, both languages where the usage was greater than elsewhere. One reason for this easy conquest is that the Latin is more suitable than the vowelless Arabic script for expressing African languages. (Trimingham 1980: 101–102)

This is rather clearly untrue, at least for the languages under discussion here. In fact, Hausa (Chadic), Fulfulde (Niger-Congo) and Chadian Arabic (Semitic), as well as Kanuri (Nilo-Saharan), can all be adequately represented in Arabic script—and indeed have been so for centuries—requiring only a few minor modifications, just like those which have been required for

[22] A history of UNESCO's and then ISESCO's work in this field is given first in Chtatou (1992).

writing these languages in Roman script for the last hundred years or so. In several cases, a modified Arabic script may in fact be better suited, as has been claimed for Swahili:

> Originally [the earliest surviving manuscript is from 1652] Arabic script was not very suitable to represent the Swahili sounds, but over the years Swahili scholars have improved it by adding signs, partly taken from the Persian and Urdu traditions, so that today Arabic script is in many ways superior to Roman in showing phonemic features. There are two major conventions: the old 'stenographic' convention, in which the writing is clearly used as no more than an aid to refresh the reciter's memory, and, at the other extreme, there is Mw. Yahya Ali's perfected adaptation of Arabic script to the Swahili language, in which all the alveolar and aspirated consonants are carefully represented so that his method of orthography is in fact superior to the Roman alphabet without phonetic diacritics. (Knappert 1989: 74)

2.1. *Hausa*

The earliest origins of *ajamin Hausa* have been described in detail:

> It may have been in the late 10/15 or early 10–11/16 century [i.e. 15th–16th centuries CE] that the custom of writing the Hausa language using a modified form of the [sic] Arabic script called *ajami* first began to develop in Kano and Katsina, encouraged by the Arabic literacy taught by these foreign *'ulamā'*. Most of the letters of the *ajami* alphabet have Hausa names that appear to be very old words not likely to have come from the language as it has been spoken in the recent past. This suggests that the use of the *ajami* script was familiar to the Hausa malams long before the time of the Fulani reform movement. If, as was once thought, the Fulani reformers had been the first to introduce the script, its letters would surely have been given Fulfulde names. It must be stressed that no examples of written Hausa, either in the Arabic script or in any other form of writing, have been found which date back to this early period. The earliest known example of the writing of Hausa in *ajami* falls between c. 1176/1762 and 1244/1828, but there is a strong tradition among the Hausas that their language was being written in *ajami* in the court of Mohamman Rumfa (867/1462–904/1499).
> (Hiskett 1984: 80; similarly, Yahaya 1988: 12–13)

Today, of the languages treated here, Hausa is the one most immersed in a digraphic situation, though it is perhaps surprising that even Roman-script Hausa, far predominant over *ajamin Hausa*, does not yet have an adequate standard orthography.[23] Hausa is also the language most liable to appear in both standard Arabic-script orthographies—Ḥafṣ in the printed *Al-Fijir*

[23] E.g. with respect to vowel length, Nigerian ⟨'y⟩ as against Nigerien ⟨y⟩, and full representation of the vast stock of ancient and more modern Arabic loanwords.

newspaper (with adaptations marked by hand on the front page and only irregularly inside), and Warš in the handwritten Tijāniyya booklets, for which the orthography presented here is typical.

Table 1: Hausa consonant graphemes: Warš-based Arabic-script and Anglophone-context[24] Roman-script orthographies (multiple sources including Yahaya 1988: 31–42; Philips 2000: 19–27; Newman 2000: 729–740)[25]

Consonants	Labial	Alveolar	Palatal[26]	Velar	Glottal
Plosive					
voiceless		ت /t/ t	+ث /tʃ/ c	ک /k/ k	+ع /ʔ/ '
voiced	ب /b/ b	د /d/ d	ج /dʒ/ j	+غ /g/ g	
glottalized[27]	+ٻ /ɓ/ ɓ	+ط /ɗ/ ɗ	+ۑ /ʄ/ 'y	ف /k'/ ƙ	
Fricative					
voiceless	ڢ /f/ f	س /s/ s	ش /ʃ/ sh		ح /h/ h
voiced		ز /z/ z			
glottalized		+ڟ /s'/ ts			
Nasal	م /m/ m	ن /n/ n			
Flap		ر /ɾ/ r			
Approximant		ل /l/ l	ي /j/ y	و /w/ w	

Consonantal signs have many alternative forms, reflecting regional or purely personal phonological or graphic preferences:

– /ɓ/: ٻ may also appear undifferentiated from ب, as پ (Amudani 2001), as ٿ,[28] or even as ض (e.g. in مَي كُضْتَرَ دَ بَاِينسَ ⟨may kuḍ$_2$utar da ba'yinsa⟩ *mai kuɓutar da bayinsa* 'Saviour of his servants'[29]).

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[24] The Francophone context of Niger may affect Roman-script choices, including ⟨ch⟩ for /ʃ/; ⟨y⟩ is also used in Niger for /ʄ/.

[25] Tables present orthographies in the form of phoneme charts, listing: Arabic-script grapheme, IPA phoneme, Roman-script grapheme. Adaptations of an Arabic-script grapheme's form or phonological value are marked with a plus sign ⟨+⟩.

[26] For the languages under primary consideration here, /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ are considered as equivalent to /c/ and /ɟ/.

[27] This term is used here to refer to a range of sounds, common in Afroasiatic languages, which may be realized as implosives or ejectives.

[28] For example, in the pamphlet أَرْبَعُونَ حَدِيثًا "Forty Hadith", Kano.

[29] This expression is given as a translation of السَّلاَمُ in شَرْحُ أَسْمَاءُ اللهِ اِلْحُسْنَىٰ "Explanation of

- /t͡ʃ/: ث may be related to the historical phonology of Hausa (e.g. Arabic تِسْعِين ⟨tis⁰ʿiyn⟩ /tisʕiːn/ becomes Hausa شَسَعِن ⟨ṯasaʿin⟩ /t͡ʃasaʕin/ 'ninety'),[30] but alongside this Kano form (which may also be marked with three additional subscript dots) existed Sokoto's ش with a subscript dot converting the fricative /ʃ/ into an affricate /t͡ʃ/, and a further modern alternative is ث with three additional subscript dots.[31]
- /ɗ/: ط has been explained as related to Hausa pronunciation.[32]
- /f/: ف may also appear as پ ⟨b₁⟩, because [p] and [f] are allophones in Hausa.[33]
- /h/: ح ⟨ḥ⟩, known as *ha ƙarami* 'small h [Hausa]', may be interchanged with ه ⟨h⟩, known as *ha kuri/babba* 'bold/big h [Hausa]' (the latter otherwise in Hausa reserved for writing الله *ʾAllāh* and Qur'anic names etc.) so that هَوْسَا ⟨haw⁰sa'⟩ and حَوْسَا ⟨ḥaw⁰sa'⟩ both occur, or even with خ ⟨ẖ⟩, called *ha mai ruwa* 'rough/velar h [Hausa]'.
- ⟨l⟩: ل /l/ may also appear as ض ⟨ḍ⟩, known as *lodi* [Hausa], which has been explained as related to pronunciation habits.[34]
- /s/: س ⟨s⟩ may also appear as ص ⟨ṣ⟩, but mostly in the corresponding Arabic loanwords (e.g. صَلَاة ⟨ṣal'aẗ⟩ *salla* 'prayer [Hausa]').
- /z/: ز ⟨z⟩may also appear as ذ ⟨ḏ⟩ or even ظ ⟨ḍ̣⟩.
- The labialized and palatalized velars /gʷ/ and /gʲ/, /kʷ/ and /kʲ/, and /k'ʷ/ and /k'ʲ/ are usually not written, e.g. كْي ⟨k⁰y⟩ and كْو ⟨k⁰w⟩, as one might expect, but كِي ⟨kiy⟩ or كُو ⟨kuw⟩, and even with the following vowel sound intervening (e.g. كَو ⟨kaw⟩ for /kwa/). As noted above for other distinctive Hausa sounds, three dots usually smaller than standard *nuqaṭ* may be added above for labialization and below for palatalization (e.g. كَوْتَا ⟨k₃aw⁰ta'⟩ *kyauta*).

the beautiful names of Allah", Kano; similarly with two superscript dots ض for Cameroonian Fulfulde (also in a product from Kano).

30 "From whatever quarter Arabic loan-words came into Hausa the attempt to differentiate ث from ت gave occasion to its palatalisation as *ch*" (Robinson 1906: xxii).

31 "In Sokoto the usual solution was to add a dot underneath the Arabic letter 'shin' (ش), to show that the sound was an affricate rather than a fricative" (Philips 2000: 21). This may, given the Sokoto connection, reflect the influence of Fulfulde, in which [ʃ] and [t͡ʃ] are allophones.

32 "that is also its pronunciation in Arabic by Hausa speakers" (Philips 2000: 20).

33 /f/ is usually considered by native speakers as 'best' rendered as a bilabial fricative [β].

34 "in attempting to pronounce the Ar. palatal d ض the Hausas sometimes substitute for it *l*" (Robinson 1906: xxiv)

Table 2: Hausa vowel graphemes: Warš-based Arabic-script and Anglophone-context Roman-script orthographies (multiple sources including Yahaya 1988: 31–42; Philips 2000: 19–27; Newman 2000: 729–740)[35]

Vowels	front		centre		back	
	short	long	short	long	short	long
close	ٮِ /i/ i*	ٮِي ⟨iy⟩ /iː/ i*			ٮُ /u/ u	ٮُو ⟨uw⟩ /uː/ ū
mid	+ٮٰى ⟨$e^{a}y_{1}$⟩ /e/ e*	+ٮٰى ⟨$e^{a}y_{1}$⟩ /eː/ e*			ٮُو ⟨uw⟩ /o/ o*	ٮُو ⟨uw⟩ /oː/ o*
open			ٮَ /a/ a	ٮَا ⟨aʾ⟩/aː/ ā		

– /e/: ٮٰى ⟨ey_{1}^{a}⟩ is perhaps surprisingly regular in its form, though medially it may appear with the two *nuqaṭ* of ي as ـيٰـ ⟨ey^{a}⟩, or even in a non-combining form -ٮٰى ⟨$e.y_{1}^{a}$⟩ (Amudani 2001).
– Length of /e/ and /o/: The traditional forms ٮٰى ⟨$e^{a}y_{1}$⟩ /e/ and ◌ُو ⟨uw⟩ /o/, by using a consonant character to mark a short vowel, make it impossible to represent vowel length as one might do for ◌َا ⟨aʾ⟩ /aː/, ◌ِي ⟨iy⟩ /iː/ and ◌ُو ⟨uw⟩ /uː/. The ◌ُو ⟨uw⟩ form has the further problem of bivalence, such that دُوكَ ⟨duwka⟩ may stand for /doka/ *doka* 'law' or /duːka/ *dūka* 'to beat' (and in practice often also /duka/ *duka* 'all'); though homonymy is not in itself unusual, it is to be avoided if possible in texts perceived as sacred, which is why the *Alphabet National du Tchad* and the various Fulfulde varieties introduce new special characters for vowels.
– Word-initial vowels require a consonantal 'bearer' in Arabic script:

> The letters *alif* and *ain* are used in Hausa simply as the bearers of the vowel-sounds and are frequently interchanged, cf. *ita* إِتَ and عِتَ she; the presence of an *alif* does not at all necessarily imply that the syllable is long or that the accent rests on that syllable. The letter ع *ain* is but rarely used by the Hausas except in words which they have borrowed from Arabic.
>
> (Robinson 1906: xiv)

Finally, the cliticized spelling of subject pronouns is usually possible, as many Hausa pronouns are monosyllabic and similar to Arabic person prefixes. However, practice is highly inconsistent in this regard. Roman-script

[35] Arabic-script vowel graphemes are presented on a placeholding ⟨ٮ⟩. Under-differentiation is marked with an asterisk sign ⟨*⟩.

Hausa, perhaps influenced by English norms, does not cliticize subject or object pronouns (though it does possessive pronouns).

2.2. *Fulfulde*

Fulfulde has strong historical literary traditions, like Hausa, most famously of course in the person of Sheikh ʿUthman ɗan Fodio, but in northern Nigeria and Niger, Fulfulde was being eclipsed by Hausa already in the mid-19th century.

Today, as in Hausa, digraphia is strong, with Roman-script production outstripping *ajamiyya Fulfulde* by far. The latter is almost always written (by Muslims and Christians) following Warš orthography, reflecting the strength of Tijāniyya among Fulani. Islamic pamphlets used in northern Cameroon often come from Kano, where they are produced alongside those in Hausa, so that most of Cameroon's indigenous printed Arabic-script Fulfulde comes from NGOs, Christian missions such as JCMWA, and the *Alliance Biblique du Cameroun*, which is currently publishing the Fulfulde Bible, *Deftere Allah*, in Arabic script, using the orthography presented in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3: Cameroonian Fulfulde consonant graphemes: Warš-based Arabic-script and Anglophone-context Roman-script orthographies (primary source Clark 2007)[36]

Consonants	Labial	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive					
voiceless	+ڥ /p/ p	ت /t/ t	+ش /tʃ/ c	ک /k/ k	+ع /ʔ/ '
voiced	ب /b/ b	د /d/ d	ج /dʒ/ j	+غ /g/ g	
glottalized	+بٔ ⟨bʔ⟩ /ɓ/ ɓ	+ط /ɗ/ ɗ	+ئ ⟨yʔ⟩/ʄ/ ƴ		
prenasalized	+مب ⟨mb⟩ /^{m}b/ mb	+ند ⟨nd⟩ /^{n}d/ nd	+نجٚ ⟨nǧ⟩ /^{n}dʒ/ nj	+نغ* ⟨nġ⟩ /^{ŋ}g/ ng	
Fricative	ڢ /f/ f	س /s/ s			ح /h/ h
Nasal	م /m/ m	ن /n/ n	+يٛ /ɲ/ ny	+نغ* ⟨nġ⟩ /ŋ/ ŋ	
Flap		ر /ɾ/ r			
Approximant		ل /l/ l	ي /j/ y	و /w/ w	

[36] Nigerian Fulfulde is using Ḥafṣ-based orthography (though using the elongated form of

Consonantal signs include a number of differences from Nigerian Fulfulde.

- /ɓ/: بٔ ⟨bʔ⟩ and ئ ⟨yʔ⟩ /ʄ/ (formerly also ڢٔ ⟨f_1ʔ⟩ /p/) are missionary innovations from the work of JCMWA/*Sawtu Linjila* in the early 1990s, which have however gained quite some currency outside of their home constituencies (the same is known to have happened with orthographies of other Fulfulde languages further to the west). Nigerian Fulfulde instead follows Hausa conventions, with پ /ɓ/ and ۑ /ʄ/.
- /t͜ʃ/: The choice of ش for this sound reflects the fact that [tʃ] and [ʃ] are allophones in Fulfulde. However, the Hausa form ث is also attested, as are, to the west, various modifications of ت, ث or ش involving carons or dots, i.e *nuqaṭ*.
- /ŋ/: نغ ⟨nġ⟩ is considered to be unproblematic in Cameroonian Fulfulde, despite its homography with /ᵑg/. Nigerian Fulfulde instead differentiates between the digraph نغ ⟨nġ⟩ /ᵑg/ and the ligature ڠ /ŋ/.
- /ɲ/: ي is a ligature of ن ⟨n⟩ and ي ⟨y⟩, based on the form of ي. Nigerian Fulfulde instead bases its ني /ɲ/ on the form of ن ⟨n⟩ (as also ISESCO and the *National Alphabet of Chad*), reflecting a different phonological analysis and different results from literacy testing.
- /p/: This phoneme requires a character (ڢ) with a form based on the Warš ڢ /f/ in Fulfulde because of the distinctive grammatical relationship between singular /p/ (e.g. *pullo*) and plural /f/ (e.g. *fulɓe*). Use of a ب based form such as پ would obscure this grammatical relationship. Nigerian Fulfulde's Ḥafṣ-based orthography correspondingly bases its ڤ /p/ on the Ḥafṣ ف /f/.

Table 4: Cameroonian Fulfulde vowel graphemes: Warš-based Arabic-script and Anglophone-context Roman-script orthographies (primary source: Clark 2007)

Vowels	front		centre		back	
	short	long	short	long	short	long
close	بِ /i/ i	بِي ⟨iy⟩ /iː/ ii			تُ /u/ u	تُو ⟨uw⟩ /uː/ uu
mid	+ب /e/ e	+بٖى ⟨ey_1ᵃ⟩ /eː/ ee			+تٛ /o/ o	+تٛو ⟨ŵ⟩ /oː/ oo
open			تَ /a/ a	تَا ⟨aʾ⟩ /aː/ aa		

kāf known as *swash kaf* ڪ, as in Warš), with different character choices for /ɓ/, /ʄ/, /p/, /ɲ/ and /ŋ/, as noted in the discussion below.

2.3. *Chadian Arabic*

The term *ajami* is of course not quite proper in reference to Chadian Arabic, but several of the issues discussed above for Hausa and Fulfulde apply here too. Despite the continuous presence of Classical Arabic in the form of the Qurʾān, the historical developments in phonology and grammar which have led to the existence of at least ten distinct African Arabic varieties have certainly been paralleled by orthographic developments when speakers attempt to write their local variety of Arabic. It should be noted in this connection that most of the history of the Warš Qurʾān has taken place in West Africa, and its distinctive *ʾimāla* umlauting (see above) and neglect of *hamza* blend together with West African realization of of ق /q/ as [g], the loss of interdentals and the loss of emphatics by non-native speakers.

Today, the digraphic situation of Chadian Arabic remains in favour of Arabic script, and Roman script is appearing only relatively recently—in commercial advertising, and in the substantial literacy work of the Roman Catholic Church and SIL International. Both scripts are used in the *Alliance Biblique du Tchad*'s Chadian Arabic Bible (the New Testament drafted in Arabic script and manually transferred into Roman script, the Old Testament drafted in Roman script and converted automatically in the other direction), which uses a Modern Standard Arabic-based Arabic-script orthography (as presented in Tables 5 and 6 below) in accordance with the *Alphabet national du Tchad* (*version arabe*) and wider informal use in the region, where traditions of Arabic writing are more strongly influenced from the northeast than from Nigeria and Cameroon to the southwest.

Table 5: Chadian Arabic consonant graphemes: MSA-based Arabic-script and Francophone-context Roman-script orthographies (primary sources: Pommerol 1999; Heath 2005)

Consonants	Labial	Alveolar	Emphatic	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive						
vl	+پ /p/ p	ت /t/ t*	ط /ŧ/ t*	+تش ⟨tš⟩ /t͡ʃ/ c*, tc	ك /k/ k	+ع ء /ʕ/ ʼ*
vd	ب /b/ b	د /d/ d*	ض /đ/ d*	ج /d͡ʒ/ j	+ق /g/ g	
Fricative						
vl	ف /f/ f	س, (ث) /s/ s*	ص /ʂ/ s*	ش /ʃ/ ch, c*	خ /x/ kh*, x	ح, ه /h/ h*
vd		ز, (ذ), (ظ) /z/ z			غ /ɣ/ kh*	

Consonants	Labial	Alveolar	Emphatic	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Nasal	م /m/ m	ن /n/ n		+ني ⟨ny⟩/ɲ/ ny		
Flap		ر /ɾ/ r				
Approximant		ل /l/ l		ي /j/ y	و /w/ w	

Consonantal sign choices are significantly affected by the close relationship of the entire language (not just a number of loanwords) to Modern Standard Arabic. Many more educated writers prefer to try to follow Modern Standard Arabic conventions, but

> Une telle écriture varie selon le degré d'érudition de celui qui écrit, et n'est généralement lisible que par son auteur ou par quelqu'un possédant le même niveau de culture en arabe littéraire. Une lettre en arabe "local" reçue du village et écrite par un "faki" en caractères arabes, passe de mains en mains avant d'être déchiffrée et traduite correctement au destinataire.[37]
>
> (de Pommerol 1997: 122)

This complex relationship between Chadian Arabic and Modern Standard Arabic is also reflected in the practice of SIL International, which occasionally uses Arabic characters to reflect phonetic distinctions which are not encoded in its corresponding Roman-script orthography (e.g. the emphatics above), and, for etymological reasons, even uses additional Arabic characters to reflect distinctions absent from mother-tongue Chadian Arabic speech (ث ⟨ṯ⟩ /θ/, ذ ⟨ḏ⟩ /ð/, ظ ⟨ḏ̣⟩ /ð̶/, though these may be replaced, as in speech, by ت ⟨t⟩ /t/, د ⟨d⟩ /d/, ض ⟨ḍ⟩ /đ/; see brackets above). It should also be noted that ق ⟨q⟩ is an etymological choice for the voiced velar plosive /g/ (represented in Hausa as غ ⟨ġ⟩, and by ISESCO as گ ⟨k_1⟩). Etymological spellings are a common issue when writing a non-standard form of a language (e.g. the Krio languages, such as Nigerian and Cameroonian Pidgin, or even Swiss German), but they are all the more necessary in the case of such a highly prestigious standard as Classical Arabic.

- چ /tʃ/ and ڽ /ɲ/ have recently been fixed by the *Alphabet national du Tchad* (2009) to replace the commonly used digraphs given above تش ⟨tʃ⟩ and ني ⟨nj⟩.

[37] "This kind of writing varies according to the writer's level of education, and is usually legible only to its author or someone with the same level of experience in using literary

Table 6: Chadian Arabic vowel graphemes: MSA-based Arabic-script and Francophone-context Roman-script orthographies (primary sources: Pommerol 1999; Heath 2005)

Vowels	front		centre		back	
	short	long	short	long	short	long
close	ـبِ /i/ i	بِي ⟨iy⟩ /iː/ ii			ـتُ /u/ u	نُو ⟨uw⟩ /uː/ uu
mid	+ـتَ* /e/ e	+يَي* ⟨ay⟩ /eː/ ee			+نَو* ⟨aw⟩ /o/ o	+نَو* ⟨aw⟩ /oː/ oo
open			ـتَ* /a/ a	نَا ⟨aʾ⟩ /aː/ aa		

2.4. *National Alphabet of Chad*

Having surveyed the three major orthographies currently in use, we now turn to the one formal, government-approved Arabic-script national alphabet of the region. The origins, and some of the problems, of the *Alphabet national du Tchad* (*version arabe*) have been discussed above.

Consonantal signs are provided for the full known consonantal phoneme inventory of Chadian languages. The Arabic-script orthography includes seventeen adaptations (labials, lateral fricatives, back nasals, prenasals and a glottal), formed by addition of *nuqaṭ* and creating ligatures (combining one letter with the *nuqaṭ* of another). The Roman-script orthography includes just five adaptations (glottalized plosives and back nasals), formed by addition of a hook or tilde (a subscript dot stood in place of a hook in earlier orthographies of the region). Roman-script digraphs appear where Arabic script has ligatures, but there are also a large number of Arabic-script digraphs used, which are not marked in the ANT, including palatalized or labialized consonants such as كي ⟨ky⟩ /ky/, كو ⟨kw⟩ /kw/, قي ⟨qy⟩ /gy/, قو ⟨qw⟩ /gw/ or prenasalized consonants such as مپ ⟨mp⟩ /mp/, نت ⟨nt⟩ /nt/, نچ ⟨nǧ$_1$⟩ /ntʃ/, نك ⟨nk⟩ /nk/, نق ⟨nq⟩ /nq/, نو ⟨nw⟩ /nw/.

Arabic. A letter in 'local' Arabic received from the village and written by a 'faki' in Arabic script, has to be passed from hand to hand before it can eventually be deciphered and translated correctly to its addressee".

Table 7: *Alphabet national du Tchad* consonant graphemes: MSA-based Arabic-script and Francophone-context Roman-script orthographies (primary source: DAPLAN Tchad 2009)

Consonants	Labial	Dental	Alveolar	Emphatic	Palatal	Velar	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Plosive								
voiceless	+پ /p/ p		ت /t/ t	(ط) /ŧ/ t	+چ /tʃ/ c	ك /k/ k		ؤ ئ إ أ ء /ʔ/ ’
voiced	ب /b/ b		د /d/ d	(ض) /đ/ d	ج /dʒ/ j	ق /g/ g		
Glottalized	+ٻ /ɓ/ +ɓ		ط /ɗ/ +ɗ		+ج /ʄ/ +ƴ			
Prenasalized	+م /^{m}b/ mb		+د /^{n}d/ nd		+ج /^{n}j/ nj	+ڠ /^{ŋ}g/ ng		
Double Articulated								
voiceless	+ڮ /kp͜/ kp							
voiced	+ڨ /gb͜/ gb							
Fricative								
voiceless	ف /f/ f	(ث) /θ/ s	س /s/ s	(ص) /ʂ/ s	ش /ʃ/ ch	خ /x/ kh	(ح) /ħ/ h	ه /h/ h
voiced	+ڤ /v/ v	(ذ) /ð/ z	ز /z/ z	(ظ) /ðˤ/ z		(غ) /ɣ/ kh	(ع) /ʕ/ ’	+ة /ɦ/ ɦ
Prenasalized	+م /^{m}v/ mv							
Lateral								
voiceless			+ڵ /ɬ/ sl					
voiced			+ڶ /ɮ/ zl					
Nasal	م /m/ m		ن /n/ n		+ڽ /ɲ/ +ɲ̱	+ڠ /ŋ/ +ŋ		
Flap	+ ڤ /v/ vb		ر /ɾ/ r					
Approximant			ل /l/ l		ي /j/ y	و /w/ w		

The forms ڨ ⟨q⟩ /g/ and ط ⟨ṭ⟩ /ɗ/ are not to be understood as adaptations of existing Modern Standard Arabic characters, but true correspondences, reflecting local pronunciation habits. A principle generally followed by ISESCO and its partners is that the Modern Standard Arabic values of characters should be maintained as much as possible, at least in terms of the Arabic phonological system (though not necessarily in phonetic detail).

Finally, the nine dentals, emphatics, pharyngeals and voiced velar fricative (bracketed in Table 7) occur in no known indigenous Chadian language and are included in Arabic script specifically for Modern Standard Arabic itself.

Table 8: *Alphabet national du Tchad* vowel graphemes: MSA-based Arabic-script and Francophone-context Roman-script orthographies (primary source: DAPLAN Tchad 2009)

Vowels	front		centre		back	
	short	long	short	long	short	long
close	بِ /i/ i	بِي ⟨iy⟩ /iː/ ii			تُ /u/ u	تُو ⟨uw⟩ /uː/ uu
mid	+بٜ /e/ e	+بٜي ⟨ey⟩ /eː/ ee	+بٖ /ɨ/ ɨ	+بٖي ⟨ₐy⟩ /ɨː/ ɨɨ	+تٝ /o/ o	+تٝو ⟨ʿw⟩ /oː/ oo
open-mid	+تٚ /ɛ/ ɛ	+بٚي ⟨ˇy⟩ /ɛː/ ɛɛ	+تٛ /ə/ ə	+تٛا ⟨˘ʾ⟩ /əː/ əə	+تٛ /ɔ/ ɔ	+تٛو ⟨ˆw⟩ /ɔː/ ɔɔ
open			تَ /a/ a	تَا ⟨aʾ⟩ /aː/ aa		

The three Arabic vowels are here supplemented with *ʾimāla* ◌ٜ ⟨e⟩ for /e/ and reversed *ḍamma* ◌ٝ ⟨u₁⟩ for /o/, and creative solutions for the open-mid and central vowels. These solutions are fairly representative of the practices of language projects across the region. Nasalization and tone are not dealt with in the ANT.

3. General Problems

In view of the above, we can summarize some of the distinctive problems of Arabic script use for languages in the region.

The 'orthographic base' may be the Ḥafṣ/Modern Standard Arabic orthography (e.g. ف ⟨f⟩, ق ⟨q⟩, ك ⟨k⟩, ن ⟨n⟩) as in Chadian Arabic and Nigerian Fulfulde, or the Warš orthography (e.g. ڢ ⟨f₁⟩, ڧ ⟨q₁⟩, ک ⟨k₂⟩, ں ⟨n₁⟩) as in

Hausa (typically) and Cameroonian Fulfulde.

A number of letters cause particular debate, usually because there is no accepted standard or because new language development projects want to retain maximum differentiation even when local traditions do not do so (e.g. Hausa's ◌ُو ⟨uw⟩ for /o/ and /uː/) or achieve standardization with neighbouring or related languages. The projects discussed here, and languages further west, may use:

- پ or بٔ ⟨bʔ⟩ for /ɓ/
- ث, ٿ, ٮٚ, ش, ڃ, تش ⟨tš⟩ for /t͡ʃ/
- غ, گ, ق, ڧ for /g/
- ح, ه for /h/
- ڠ, ڨ, نغ ⟨nġ⟩, نجٚ ⟨nğ⟩ for /ŋ/
- ڽ, يٛ, ني ⟨ny⟩, نٔى ⟨nʔy₁⟩ for /ɲ/
- پ, ٻ, ڡ, ڢ, ڥ, ڤ, ٮ, ڨ for /p/
- ۑ, ئ ⟨ʔy⟩, ج, چ for /y/

As for systemic phonological features in the region, labialization, palatalization and prenasalization are relatively easily dealt with (though they raise some questions about the use of *sukūn* ◌ْ). Syllable-final consonant gemination (which would require *šadda* ◌ّ and *sukūn*) can be best resolved by not marking the gemination, though the use of *sukūn* word-finally is often itself a matter for discussion. The features of nasalization and tone remain difficult to represent in Arabic script.

4. Arabic Loanwords

Ironically perhaps, it is Arabic loanwords[38] that often present some of the greatest problems for Arabic-script orthographies of African languages (though in fact similar problems are presented by English and French loanwords such as *school*/*école* and *policeman*/*gendarme* in African-language Roman-script orthographies, and by any process of adoption of terms into another language, e.g. Greek *epískopos* 'overseer', which appears as English *bishop*, Welsh *esgob*, French *évêque* and Swahili *askofu*). A number of special features of the Arabic language interact in complex ways with local Arabic-script orthographies.

[38] For a number of references on Arabic loanwords in African languages, see Warren-Rothlin (2009: 52, n. 8).

The proclitic Arabic definite article -ال *ʾal-* (/ʔal/), is often imported into a language together with a noun (e.g. English *alcohol*, *algebra*; Hausa *albasa* 'onion', *alkama* 'wheat'), sometimes twice (e.g. Chadian Arabic *al-almi* 'the water', Yoruba *aladura* 'the prayer'). Even denominal verbs may retain *ʾal-* (e.g. Hausa *alkawarta* 'to promise', *almajirantar da* 'to disciple'). But *ʾal-* may often lose its /a-/, resulting in a large number of words starting with /l-/ (e.g. Hausa *lafia* 'health', *larabci* 'Arabic', *liman* 'imam', *linjila* 'Gospel', *likkafa* 'stirrup'[39]).[40] And of course *ʾal-* regularly assimilates its /-l-/ before dentals, sibilants and liquids (due to a phonological rule applying to the so called 'sun-letters' in Arabic) in phonetic realization, which it then doubles, and it is this phonetic form which is borrowed into other languages (e.g. Hausa *addu'a* 'prayer', *addini* 'religion', *annabi* 'prophet').

Several features of Arabic consonant phonology are lost in African pronunciation. The special dentals and emphatics are usually reduced to simple alveolar [t], [d], [s] and [z], and the range of velar, pharyngeal and glottal sounds may be collapsed (e.g. Arabic (ال)خَبَر, (*ʾal-*)*ẖabar* 'news', appears as Swahili *habari*, Fulfulde (Cameroon and Nigeria) *habaru*, Fulfulde (Senegal) *kabaaru*, Hausa and Zarma *labari* and Kanuri *lawar*; Arabic سُوق *sūq* 'market' appears as Kanuri *ka-sugu/ka-suwu* and hence Hausa *kasuwa*; Arabic وَعَّاظ *waʿʿāḏ* 'preacher' appears as Fulfulde (Cameroon and Nigeria) *ga'aji-noowo*. Constraints on syllable and word structure may similarly force changes in loanwords (e.g. Arabic إمام *ʾimām* appears as Swahili *imamu* or Hausa *liman*).

Even Arabic morphology may be reflected in loanwords, such as the case system (*a, i, u*), nunation and the prefixes of some verbal stems.

The above features may often require those writing in Arabic script to choose between phonetic and etymological forms of the same word, and if etymological forms are used, characters otherwise absent from their orthographies are employed. Thus the proper noun مُحَمَّد *Muḥammad* must be spelt thus even if local phonetic forms of this name are simply *Mama*, *Moomo* or *Muammar*, and even if the language does not itself use the character ح ⟨ḥ⟩. Similarly, الله *ʾAllāh* and ابراهيم *ʾIbrāhīm* must appear in these forms even if the language (as is the case quite commonly in the region) does not itself use the character ه ⟨h⟩ (cf. forms such as *naïve* and *Qatar* in English). But most cases involving loanwords are less clear-cut. The Modern Stan-

[39] This is a complex example (Hiskett 1965: 23).

[40] For comparable elision in Arabic itself, see Wright (1986: §19, rem. b). For this and other modifications of loanwords with the Arabic article in Hausa, see Robinson (1906: xv–xvi).

dard Arabic words الْدُّعَاء ⟨ʾl^{0}d^{2}uʿaʾʔ⟩, and النَّبِي ⟨ʾln^{2}abiy⟩ are spoken /ʔadːuːʕa/ and /ʔanːabī/, for which typical phonetic spellings would be عَدُّوْعَ ⟨ʿad^{2}uw^{0}ʿa⟩ and عَنَّبِي ⟨ʿan^{2}abiy⟩. However, in most cases, word recognition and respect for the 'sacred' Arabic language and Qurʾanic text speak for use of the less natural 'etymological' spelling. But etymological spellings may predominate over phonetic spellings in the most secular of domains too, such as when the company *National Lube* transliterates its name as ناشيونال لوب ⟨nʾšywnʾl lwb⟩ (a non-phonetic ي ⟨y⟩ representing the /i/ in *National*). On the other hand, phonetic, 'non-etymological' spelling appears of course frequently when writers have little knowledge of Arabic, but also deliberately to achieve a youthful 'fun' impression in advertising (e.g. recent campaigns by Zain Chad).

These 'phonetic' and 'etymological' forms may even co-exist. Just as English has borrowed terms from Latin direct and via French (e.g. *regal* vs. *royal*), so Hausa has borrowed terms from Classical Arabic direct (e.g. those with *ʾal-*) and via Kanuri or Tuareg or various colloquial (*ʿāmmiyya*) forms of Arabic (e.g. the *l*-initial words above); this has resulted in a number of double borrowings.[41]

5. Conclusions

A lot more work remains to be done on orthographic conventions, regional tendencies, the choices made by particular writers, and the phonetic, graphic or traditional factors involved in some of the unusual choices. And this work may be of historical and linguistic interest, as well as informing those many language development projects in the region which are looking for guidance and sometimes almost starting from scratch. The many outsiders involved, whether from ISESCO, SIL or elsewhere, need a high degree of respect for, and sensitivity to, local historical traditions to balance out their own values, whether they are scholarly (elegance of phonological analysis and orthographic system) or practical (functional literacy), especially when existing traditions are clearly formally inadequate. What can be concluded for certain, however, is that the conflicting interests (whether technical or ideological) of the Central Bank of Nigeria, Nokia, *Boko Haram*, Tijāniyya,

[41] For example, in Hausa, the following multiple reflexes of Arabic phonemes: ب ⟨b⟩ Classical /b/, colloquial /f/; ث ⟨ṯ⟩ Classical /s/, colloquial /t/; ذ ⟨ḏ⟩ Classical /z/, colloquial /d/; ع ⟨ʿ⟩ Classical /ʿ/, colloquial Ø; ه ⟨h⟩ Classical /h/, colloquial Ø (Philips 2000: 13, 99).

Izāla, SIL International, other NGOs, and Christian missionary organizations are making research increasingly difficult and the field increasingly complex.

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SECTION IV

EAST AFRICA

CHIMI:NI IN ARABIC SCRIPT: EXAMPLES FROM BRAVA POETRY

Bana Banafunzi and Alessandra Vianello

The aim of this paper is to illustrate how the people of Brava, a coastal town in southern Somalia, have adapted the Arabic script to record their rich poetic heritage composed in the local vernacular, Chimi:ni. These poems, called *s̠te:nzi*, are didactic-religious compositions in verse, a literary genre that flourished throughout the 20th century.

1. The Town of Brava and the Chimi:ni Language

The town that the outside world knows as Brava is called by the local inhabitants Mi:ni or Mwi:ni, whence the name of their language, Chimi:ni or Chimwi:ni.[1] Chimi:ni (formerly also called Chimbal̠azi and consistently indicated with this name in the *s̠te:nzi*)[2] is a Bantu language that is exclusively spoken by the urban population of Brava. Even in the immediate hinterland of the city, Somali dialects are spoken. Some linguists have classified Chimi:ni among the Northern Swahili Dialects, as it shares several of their features.[3] However, its geographical isolation from the rest of the Swahili world has contributed to maintain several archaic characteristics in Chimi:ni, while the influence of Somali is apparent in its phonology, lexicon, and in some grammatical features. Like Swahili, Chimi:ni has extensively borrowed from Arabic, but, as we will see below, it appears that these loanwords have not undergone the same phonetic changes as in Swahili. On the

[1] The insertion of [w] is optional. It is pronounced mainly by elderly speakers or by individuals belonging to certain urban groups (especially the Hatimi). See also Nurse & Hinnebusch (1993: 6). The term *Mi:ni* might be related to *mu:yi* 'town' + locative suffix *-ni*, although the pronunciation is different.

[2] The meaning of *mbal̠azi* should be 'settlement' and for persons, 'settled, urban', i.e. living in Brava town. Sheikh Qasim bin Muhyiddin al-Barawi calls himself a *mbal̠azi* in one of his poems (*Me:zi wa ke:ndʳa*). *Pace* Nurse, who links the term *mbal̠azi* to 'cow-pea' (Nurse 2010: 192)

[3] Nurse (1983); Nurse & Spear (1985); Nurse & Hinnebusch (1993).

basis of a 500-page lexicon, it has been estimated that Somali lexical borrowings are about 20 %, and Arabic over 25 % of the total.[4]

As a result of all these characteristics, Chimi:ni is not immediately understood by Swahili speakers and presents significant differences from all other Northern Swahili dialects, even that of the nearest Swahili-speaking community, the Bajuni, who (before the on-going civil war) were settled approximately 300 km south of Brava.

Chimi:ni is still imperfectly known to linguists and no comprehensive studies on its grammar and syntax exist. Even its classification among the Northern Swahili Dialects is not universally accepted: Chimi:ni has been variously defined as "a Bantu language", "a Bantu language closely related to Swahili", "a Bantu language of the Eastern type", and "a dialect of Swahili".[5] The first pioneering works highlighted the fact that, unlike Swahili, Chimi:ni has long and short vowels and presents characteristic "prosodic features".[6] In the late 1970s, Kisseberth & Abasheikh's articles focused on Chimi:ni phonology and its verb system.[7] Based on these studies, they published a *Chimwiini lexicon exemplified* in 2004. Other studies, particularly by Derek Nurse, have attempted to trace the development of this language in historical context.[8]

If in 1975 Chimi:ni was said to be "largely undescribed",[9] this situation has not improved significantly in recent years, as the studies indicated above have just revealed the tip of the iceberg. Nowadays Chimi:ni is an endan-

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[4] For a brief overview of all these characteristics, see Nurse (1991), who based his study on the (unpublished) Kisseberth & Abasheikh's *Chimwi:ni lexicon: Preliminary materials*. Since the *s̠te:nzi* deal with Islamic religious themes, the percentage of Arabic loanwords is much higher in them than in everyday speech.

[5] "Bantu language": Kisseberth & Abasheikh (1974b: 107, 1975: 249, 1976a: 31); "Bantu language closely related to Swahili": Kisseberth & Abasheikh (1974a: 193, 1976b: 207, 1977: 179); "Bantu language of the eastern type": Abasheikh (1978: 4); "dialect of Kiswahili": Whiteley (1965), Goodman (1967), Kisseberth & Abasheikh (2004: vii).

It is to be noted in particular that Abasheikh (who was a speaker of Chimi:ni and Swahili) stated that "Chimwi:ni has been referred to as a dialect of Swahili, but this appellation is open to serious doubts" (Abasheikh 1976: 1) and "Chimwi:ni has generally been regarded as a dialect of Swahili, but there are differences at the morphonemic, morphological, and lexical levels, as well as important syntactic divergences" (Abasheikh 1978: 3). Goodman could not decide on "the question whether Bravanese is a Swahili dialect or a separate but closely related language" (Goodman 1967: 278). Nurse & Hinnebusch (1993: 507) state that the lexico-statistical figures based on word lists throw doubt on the status of Chimi:ni as a Northern Swahili dialect.

[6] Goodman (1967).

[7] See full list of their articles in the list of references.

[8] Nurse (1983), Nurse & Spear (1985).

[9] Kisseberth & Abasheikh (1975).

gered language: in the last twenty years the Chimi:ni-speaking community has been dispersed as a consequence of the civil war in Somalia and has resettled in various countries in Europe, America, and Arabia. Here, the members of the younger generation no longer use Chimi:ni as their first language and the number of Chimi:ni speakers is therefore swiftly and seriously declining.

How many Chimi:ni speakers were there until the early 1990s? In the absence of reliable census data, linguists' estimates made in the 1970s and 1980s gave figures as high as 30,000 and as low as 2,000–3,000.[10] Recent studies, however, agree on more realistic figures of 10,000 to 15,000.[11]

It is to be stressed again that Chimi:ni is (or was) the common language of all the people living in Brava, whatever their ethnic background. This common language has proved a very strong cohesive factor and has contributed to the shaping of a common identity: people speaking Chimi:ni see themselves first and foremost as Bravanese.

Those who call themselves *Wa:ntu wa Mi:ni* 'People of Brava' *tout court*, that is the two urban groups of the Hatimi and Bida, trace their ancestry from the Arabian Peninsula, especially North and South Yemen and Oman,[12] but their migrations to East Africa occurred several centuries ago, and now Chimi:ni is their first language. At least from the 19th century onward, and probably well before that time, a sizeable percentage of the urban population has consisted of Tunni, who, according to some scholars, are a confederation of people of various Somali origins.[13] The Tunni speak a Southern Somali dialect, but almost all those living in Brava were bilingual, having adopted Chimi:ni as their second language. Many of them were extremely proficient in Chimi:ni, as evidenced by the fact that one of the most prolific composers of *sṯe:nzi*, Mallim Nuri,[14] belonged to the Da'faradhi sub-clan of the Tunni. Towards the end of the 17th century, some Ashraf families left the Hadhramaut and settled in Brava and, though maintaining

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10 30,000 (including those living outside Brava): Abasheikh (1978: 3); 2,000–3,000: Nurse & Spear (1985: 57).

11 10,000 in Brava + 4,000 in Mogadishu (data for 1990): Nurse (2010: 192); 12,000–15,000: Nurse (1991: 177); 10,000: Kisseberth & Abasheikh (2004: vii).

12 In particular from the Qaḥṭāni, Wā'ili, Jabri, Amāwi, and Ḥātim tribes.

13 According to Massimo Colucci (Colucci 1924: 110), the Tunni originated from Somali of the Hawwiya, Bimal, Ajuran, Rahanweyn and other clans, mixed with Oromo. In January 1907 the number of Tunni people living in Brava town was assessed at 2,100 out of a total population of 5,062 (Piazza 1909: 20).

14 Ahmed Nur bin Haji Abdulqadir bin Abdio Hassan (1881–1959), popularly known as Mallim Nuri, was the son of the most prominent and influential elder of all the Tunni.

a generally high level of knowledge of Arabic, in the course of time adopted Chimi:ni as their first language. As elsewhere on the East African coast, groups or individuals migrating from Arabia periodically added to the urban population. The most recent of these migrations occurred around 1890, when the unsettled political situation in the Hadhramaut brought to Brava groups of people belonging to several clans from the area of Ghayl Ba Wazir, Mukalla, and Shihr.[15] Until 1905 Brava was part of the dominions of the Sultan of Zanzibar,[16] who kept in the town a garrison of over 150 soldiers (originating mainly from Hadhramaut and Baluchistan). Some of these married locally and settled permanently in the town. The second generation of all these settlers were already proficient in Chimi:ni, and by the third generation Chimi:ni had become their first language.

Chimi:ni owes many of its unique linguistic features to the interaction and centuries-long contacts between these people. For example, it shows consonant sequences that are not found elsewhere in Swahili and can be attributed to Somali and Arabic;[17] a reduced verb system more akin to Somali than to modern Swahili dialects; morphological characteristics, such as verbs ending in *-aṯa* and adjectives formed with Somali suffixes *-leh* and *-darro*.

2. The Literary Use of Chimi:ni

In Brava, Arabic has always been considered indispensable as the language of knowledge. Before and during the period when the coastal towns of southern Somalia (the Benadir), were part of the dominion of the Zanzibar Sultans, as well as during the first phase of European colonization (roughly until the First World War), Arabic was still the official written language of the region, and was used also by the fledgling Italian colonial administration to keep judicial records, as well as in all its contacts with the population (notices, proclamations, etc.).[18] In particular, the Italian administra-

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[15] For a short overview of the political situation in Hadhramaut that caused this migration, see Vianello & Kassim (2006: 29). All in all, i.e. including also the soldiers of the Zanzibari garrison, people belonging to over thirty South Arabian tribes were living in Brava at the turn of the 20th century.

[16] For a summary of the political events in East Africa in the 19th century, the gradual loss of sovereignty of the Zanzibar Sultans over the Benadir coast, and the onset of Italian colonialism, see Vianello & Kassim (2006: 6–23).

[17] Goodman (1967: 279); Nurse (1991: 181).

[18] See for example notices to Brava's population in Vianello & Kassim (2006: 395, 1615).

tors remarked that the male population of Brava was generally literate in Arabic.[19] The urban setting and the peaceful situation of the city favoured the pursuit of regular learning and children of both sexes attended Qur'ānic schools. Where both genders attended, teachers were female. In the exclusively male classes, teachers were exclusively male. After completing their course at the Qur'ānic schools, men had the option to continue their studies of Arabic and religious subjects at higher levels as disciples of the local *ʿulamāʾ*, attending study circles (*mağālis*) at the mosques, where women were not allowed to attend. However, some women, too, continued their education privately and therefore acquired more than a merely basic knowledge of Arabic. Brava had been, for most of the 19th century, the seat of religious *ṭarīqa*s, among which the Qādiriyya and ʾIdrīsiyya (also called ʾĀl ʾAḥmad) were prominent. These two Sufi brotherhoods put particular emphasis on learning, and their competition to acquire more knowledge in the seven arts of the Arabic language encouraged more and more people to learn Arabic. It was claimed that the followers of the Qādiriyya excelled in the arts of the language, while the followers of the ʾIdrīsiyya perfected the knowledge of *fiqh* and *šarīʿa* law. This competition was also reflected in the composition of *sṯe:nzi* in Chimi:ni. The composition and dissemination of the *sṯe:nzi* are essentially the result of these brotherhoods' unrelenting action to spread the knowledge of Islamic tenets to the whole population of the town, including the lower classes.

While the Swahili literary genre of *utendi* (which, as we will see, presents both similarities and significant differences from the *sṯe:nzi*) has a recorded history of several centuries,[20] the earliest extant *sṯe:nzi* are dated to the turn of the 20th century. This was a time when the local *ʿulamāʾ* felt that traditional Islam was threatened, on one hand, by European colonizers, and, on the other hand, by fundamentalist Wahhābis and by modernist views that were being propagated within the Islamic world.[21] To counteract these threats, they resorted to the use of the local vernacular and the more appealing and easily memorized poetic medium. The first to adopt this revolutionary approach to Islamic education was the charismatic Islamic leader Sheikh Uways Mohamed al-Qadiri (1847–1909). Born in Brava, Sheikh Uways first launched his missionary campaign among the Somali clans of

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19 Piazza (1909: 23).

20 The earliest known manuscript of a Swahili poem (*Utendi wa Tambuka*) is dated 1728 and a manuscript of the Swahili poetic rendition of the *Hamziyya* is dated 1749; the well-known poem *Al-Inkishafi* was composed c. 1810–1820 (Freeman-Grenville 1963). Both *utendi* and *utenzi* are used as name for this genre.

21 Kassim (2007).

the interior, composing didactic religious poems in several Somali dialects and attracting the local populace with group-performed singing (*ḏikr*). He also devised a system of writing Somali in Arabic script.[22] Tradition has it that the notation of Chimi:ni in Arabic script is due to him as well.[23] Only one *sṯe:nzi* composed by Sheikh Uways is extant,[24] but his disciples in Brava enthusiastically followed his example. In particular, Sheikh Qasim bin Muhyiddin al-Barawi (1878–1922), whose poetic production consists of both translations and adaptations of religious works from Arabic into Chimi:ni[25] and of original compositions, acknowledged his debt to Sheikh Uways and hailed him as the initiator of this kind of poetry.[26] The poetess Mana Sitti Habib Jamaladdin (popularly known as Dada Masiti) was also one of the major composers of *sṯe:nzi* of this epoch. Though much older than Sheikh Qasim (she died in 1919, reputedly aged over 100 years), she composed her most famous *sṯe:nzi* (*Baʾḏi ya hay ni mawṯi-She:xi chifa isiḻo:wa*) in 1909. Among the Bravanese poets of the younger generation, the most notable ones were Ahmed Nur bin Haji Abdulqadir ('Mallim Nuri', died 1959), who left an impressive poetic production including the translation of the Arabic poem *Matn az-zubad fī l-fiqh*, originally composed by Sheikh Aḥmad bin Raslan, and Mohamed bin Sheikh Qasim bin Muhyiddin al-Barawi ('Sheikh Mohamed Sufi', died 1969). The tradition of composing *sṯe:nzi* has continued throughout the 20th century with a number of lesser authors and is still alive today.[27] All in all, over sixty *sṯe:nzi* are extant today, their length varying from thirty-two lines to several hundreds of lines.[28]

The Bravanese authors refer to their poems either as *sṯe:nzi*, or as *qaṣīda*, or, less commonly, as *ltu:ngo* 'a string of beads'.[29] This last term (which

[22] Cerulli (1923/1957: 188).

[23] Sheikh Uways led mainly a peripatetic life, traveling widely not only within Somalia, but to Zanzibar and mainland East Africa. His Arabic notation of Chimi:ni was probably influenced by his contacts with written Swahili.

[24] "*Alfe:ni msaḻiḻe:ni*"

[25] Sheikh Qasim's two most notable works are *Naka:nza xtu:nga marja:ni*, a translation of the *ʿAqīdat al-ʿawāmm* 'Statement of belief for the common people', originally composed in Arabic by ʾAḥmad al-Marzūq, and *Jisi gani*, a translation of the *Hamziyya* of Šaraf ad-Dīn Muḥammad al Būṣīrī. He also put into Chimi:ni verse an episode from the life of the Prophet (*Salāṯun salāmun ʿala al-Muṣṭafa*).

[26] In his poem *Chiḏirke*.

[27] Some *sṯe:nzi* have been composed as late as the first decade of the 21st century.

[28] The shortest of all *sṯe:nzi* is *Iyi ni bisha:ra*, by Sheikh Mohamed Sufi, a composition of eight stanzas of four lines each, the longest Mallim Nuri's *Zubadi* (564 lines). See Vianello (2008).

[29] Sheikh Qasim, in *Naka:nza xtu:nga marja:ni*.

parallels the Arabic *naḏm* 'string of beads', which is also used for poetic composition) very aptly recalls the formal structure of these poems, which consist of strings of stanzas that are both grammatically and thematically self-contained, and can follow each other in unlimited numbers. Stanzas can be omitted when reciting the poems, or can be found misplaced in certain manuscripts, without seriously affecting the general sense of the composition.

What are the differences between the Swahili *utendi* and the Chimi:ni *sṯe:nzi*? Beside the language, the first difference is thematic: while the *utendi* can have a religious or epic subject (like, for example, the *Utendi wa Liyongo*), the *sṯe:nzi* deal with religious themes exclusively. No epic poetry exists in Brava. Secondly, the metre and rhyme of the two genres are also different: the Swahili *utendi* is a specific type of poetry, characterized by a rhyming pattern aaab … xxxb, and lines of eight syllables. Swahili poetic translations from Arabic (for example the *Hamziyya*, the *Burda*, and Barzanji's *Mawlid*) use the *ukawafi* metre.[30] Instead, the *sṯe:nzi* genre of Chimi:ni comprehensively includes poems in the *utendi* metre as well as those that faithfully reproduce the rhyme and rhythm of Arabic originals (for example in the Chimi:ni versions of the *Hamziyya* and the *Zubad*) and can have a variable number of syllables in each line, from five to fourteeen.[31] It is almost certain that most *sṯe:nzi*, in particular those that were translations from Arabic and those presenting a complex pattern,[32] were first composed in writing. However, these poems were meant to be transmitted orally and memorized. Each poem is recited or 'sung' according to a particular rhythm that is usually fixed by tradition. The preservation of the *sṯe:nzi* is mainly due to women, who can be rightly defined as the custodians of this kind of poetry. Bravanese women of the older generation know an amazing amount of poetry by heart and they also jealously preserve many written manuscripts of the *sṯe:nzi*.

In addition to the *sṯe:nzi*, other poetical genres flourished in Brava. There were spontaneous (praising or insulting) compositions sung by women on the occasion of weddings (*nṯa:ngilo*); satirical quatrains that were meant to expose instances of willfulness, snobbery, or hubris; children's rhymes;

[30] Knappert (1971).

[31] The poetess Dada Masiti was particularly skilled in composing *sṯe:nzi* in *utendi* metre. It is interesting to note that in her youth she had spent some years in the Lamu archipelago and in Zanzibar.

[32] For example, the first word of each of the stanzas of Sheikh Qasim's poem *Chiḏirke* starts with a letter of the Arabic alphabet in sequence.

and eulogies of deceased Bravanese (these latter sometimes included in the *sṯe:nzi* genre because of their religious overtones). However, none of these compositions has ever been deemed worthy of being recorded in writing. Chimi:ni is essentially an oral language. Unlike Swahili, which was sometimes used to write private documents like contracts, examples of Chimi:ni written in Arabic script are limited (in addition to the *sṯe:nzi*) to one single literary text in prose, the *Manāqib* of Sheikh Nureni, translated from the original Arabic text by Sheikh Mohamed Sufi, and to private letters, written by Bravanese women, who were generally more familiar than men with Chimi:ni in Arabic script because of their knowledge of the written *sṯe:nzi*. Men's private correspondence was mostly in Arabic and, later, in Italian. With the creation of an official Somali writing system in the early 1970s, Somali orthography has been sometimes used to write Chimi:ni in Latin script.[33] However, a variety of spellings that are left to individual choice can be seen.[34] Likewise, it is to be noted that no unified writing of Chimi:ni in Arabic script exists: the best copyists used the orthographic system that will be illustrated here below, but many texts of *sṯe:nzi* were recorded in writing just as a help to oral recitations, in the privacy of households, using a simplified writing. From the early 1990s, after their dispersal, Bravanese have acquired a new, enhanced appreciation of the *sṯe:nzi* as their most significant cultural heritage. Computer-generated texts of *sṯe:nzi* in Arabic script have multiplied and are widely disseminated. These show that modern 'copyists' are striving to reproduce as faithfully as possible the sounds of Chimi:ni phonetics, while following in some respects the system of transliterating Chimi:ni in Arabic that is found in the older manuscripts.

3. Chimi:ni in Arabic Script

The phonetic system of Chimi:ni is given by Kisseberth and Abasheikh[35] as follows:

Vowels

short:	a, e, i, o, u
long:	a: e: i: o: u: (also noted as aa, ee, ii, oo, uu)

[33] Despite the similarities of Chimi:ni and Swahili, Bravanese have never used Standard Swahili orthography to write their language.

[34] Nowadays, texts of *sṯe:nzi* in Latin script are often found on Bravanese websites.

[35] From Abasheikh (1978: 6) and Kisseberth & Abasheikh (2004: xi, xii).

Consonants

labials	p, b, f, β, v	w	m	mp^h	mb
dentals	ṯ, ḏ, θ, ð	ḻ	ṉ	nṯ^h	nḏ
coronals	t, d, dh, s, z	l, r	n	nt^h	nd
alveopalatal	ch, j, sh	y	ny	nch^h	nj
velar	k, g, x, gh			nk^h	ng
uvular	q				
glottal	ʾ				

Remarks:

- *β* is a sound shifting between [b] and [v] that is found in a limited number of words (where it can also be heard pronounced as [b] or [w]). Example: *dibi, diβi, diwi*
- *dh* is a voiced retroflex stop that entered Chimi:ni through Somali loanwords and is reproduced as *dh* in the written Somali alphabet
- *nd* is a rhotacized sound and could possibly be better represented by [nd^r]
- *l* was described by Abasheikh as "a flap [ɫ] whose articulation involves the tip of the tongue striking lightly behind the upper teeth"[36]
- *t* is according to Abasheikh (1978: 7) an alveolar stop
- *x* often replaces [q] in Arabic and Somali loanwords. It is, however, also used as a morphophonemic alternant of [ku] in infinitive forms of the verb, when the verb root starts with *ch, f, k, p, s, sh, t, ṯ*[37]
- glottal stop ʾ replaces in Chimi:ni Arabic [ʕ] and Somali [c].

For writing Chimi:ni the whole Arabic alphabet is used, because Arabic spelling is retained and faithfully reproduced in the root of all loanwords from Arabic (to which are then added vowels at the end of the word and Chimi:ni prefixes and suffixes).

Sounds not existing in Arabic, but common to Swahili and Chimi:ni, have required the use of modified Arabic letters, as follows:

ch is rendered as چ
g is rendered as گ (but also simply as ك)
p is rendered as پ (but also simply as ب)
v is rendered as ڤ
ng is rendered by ڠ (*ġayn*) with 3 dots

[36] Abasheikh (1978: 7)
[37] This rule is not valid with verb roots consisting of one consonant only. Cf. *x-p-a* 'to give' with *ku-f-a* 'to die' and *ku-ch-a* 'to dawn'.

Other adaptations are related to sounds that are specific to Chimi:ni only:

dh ظ
l̠ ڷ
t ت with another small ت above it (the diacritic looks like ̌ in handwriting)
β is simply given as ب, for example in *k-uβl̠a* 'to kill', always reproduced as كُبْلَ ⟨kub⁰la⟩.

Nasal sounds (at both the beginning of words and the beginning of syllables) are noted above the letter following them (*mb*, *nd̠*), or altogether omitted in writing; the Chimi:ni rhotacized group (*nd/ndʳ*) is reproduced as ر with superimposed ن.

In comparing Arabic writing with Chimi:ni pronunciation the following points should be noted in particular:

i. The actual pronunciation of Arabic loanwords depends on the individual speaker's knowledge of Arabic. It is therefore possible to hear different pronunciations of the same word, a 'Chimi:ni' one and an 'Arabic' one. In Chimi:ni, Arabic consonants are pronounced as follows:

   ص is pronounced like س (*si:fa*)
   ض is pronounced like ذ or د (*Ramaða:ni, marad̠i*)
   ط is pronounced like ت (*Fatima*)
   ق is pronounced either as such or as خ (*qal̠bi/xal̠bi*)
   ح is pronounced like ه (*Hasani*)
   ظ is pronounced like ذ (*ðulmu*)

ii. Arabic ع is reduced in Chimi:ni to a glottal stop and is often not pronounced at all at the beginning of a word. Compare, for example, the noun *ezi/ezzi* 'glory, dignity', which shows complete disappearance of [ʕ] compared to the verb *ku-ʾezat̠a*, from the same root (where the initial glottal stop is retained). The glottal stop is noticeable in verbs, where the Chimi:ni infinitive prefix *ku-* does not undergo the normal elision to *k-* before a vowel, when the original root starts with [ʕ]. Compare *k-i:ngila, k-uula, k-o:loka, k-a:ndika* to *ku-(ʾ)abud̠a, ku-(ʾ)e:t̠a, ku-(ʾ)i:sha*.

iii. The pronunciation of Arabic loanwords has undergone different modifications in Swahili and Chimi:ni. In Chimi:ni, Arabic ق ⟨q⟩ is either pronounced as [q] or as [x], never as [k]. Arabic ث ⟨t̠⟩, which can be pronounced as [s] in Swahili, is always pronounced as [θ] in Chimi:ni

(for example Swahili *hadithi*, *hadisi*; but Chimi:ni always *haḏi:θi*). In Chimi:ni, Arabic ط ⟨ṭ⟩ does not give rise to [tw], while ظ ⟨ḏ̣⟩ is never pronounced as [z] or [dw], and ص ⟨ṣ⟩ is never [sw].

iv. The Chimi:ni 'prosodic phrase formation', that is the changes in vowel quantity that are dependent on how words in a sentence are phrased, are not reproduced in Chimi:ni texts written in Ajami script: the latter give the vowel quantity at word-level.

Example 1: (Kisseberth & Abasheikh) *qal̠bi ichiwa nkʰavu nduza xaṯari*[38]
(Ajami text) *qal̠bi ichiwa nkavu nru:za xaṯari*

Example 2: (Kisseberth & Abasheikh) *muke chisal̠o iḏi shṯinḏo uðhiya*[39]
(Ajami text) *muke chisal̠o ʿi:ḏi shṯi:nḏo uðhiya*

v. As noted above, the *sṯe:nzi* are recited or 'sung' according to a certain musical rhythm. In these oral recitations, the rhythm governs the accents and even the length of syllables, which can exhibit changes from the normal spoken structure of the sentence. These changes, however, are not reproduced in writing. The written texts are therefore used simply as an aid to memory and do not allow a full appreciation of the poems.

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Appendix

Below we reproduce two versions of the first page of Sheikh Qasim al-Barawi's poem "Dada Masiti, pray for me", written in Ajami script. The first version is taken from a manuscript, formerly in the possession of Ahmed Badawi Sheikh bin Sheikh ('Sheikh Badawi'). This is in the hand of Shego Bakari, a well-known Bravanese copyist, and the work is dated to the late 1930s. The second version was included in a recent (2002) computerized collection of *sṯe:nzi*, by Haji Nur Mohamed Haji Nur.

Version 1: Shego Bakari's manuscript

Transliteration:

Line 1–2, verse 1	
⟨da'da ma'siti saw^{0}may^{0}l'a duʿa'way^{0}	nisaʿiy^{0}di ni'ʔa^{n}li ʿad^{0} na'ni⟩
Ḏa:ḏa Ma:siṯi nso:mela ḏu'a we	*ni sa'i:ḏi ni a:li Aḏna:ni*
Line 3–4, verse 2	
⟨way^{0} niğ$_{l}$iy^{0}kuluw^{0} ğ$_{l}$am^{0}tˇumay^{0} m^{0}ḥam^{2}adi	ni'ʔama' ni yawa'n^{0}tˇu 'ʔ$_{i}$iḥ^{0}sa'ni⟩
We ni chi:kulu cha Mtume Mhamaḏi	*ni ama:ni ya wa:nt^{h}u ihsa:ni*
Line 5–6, verse 3	
⟨d^{n}iway^{0} kan^{0}zi yaka'yiy^{0} b$_{l}$ay^{0}d^{n}a w^{0} za w^{0}	niğida'ri yakul^{2}a'i y^{0}ma'ni⟩
Nḏiwe kanzi ya ka:i [na] mpe:nḏozo	*ni jiḏa:ri ya kul̲l̲a ima:ni*
Line 7–8, verse 4	
⟨ḫ^{0}b$_{l}$ay^{0}d^{n}aw^{0}wa'way^{0} nifar^{0}ḍi maw^{0}ğa' hadiy-^{0}	-lay^{0} taʿa'lay$_{l}^{a}$ kar^{0}ka qur^{0}ʔa'ni⟩
Xpenḏowa: we ni farði Mo:ja haḏi:=	*=łe Ṯa'a:la karka Qur'a:ni*
Line 9–10, verse 5	
⟨šaw^{0}ḫub$_{l}$ay^{0}d^{n}a nimuw^{0}tˇuw^{0} šaw^{0}diy^{0}ni	nimağa'hiliwa y^{0}y^{n0}a ʿiṣ^{0}ya'ni⟩
Sho xupe:nḏa ni mu:nt^{h}u sho ḏi:ni	*ni maja:hili we:nye ʿisiya:ni*
Line 11–12, verse 6	
⟨ḫusifa' way^{0}s^{0}ḫa'diri ṣifazaw^{0}	nikaṯiy^{0}ri tˇazi y^{0}mu bul^{0}da'ni⟩
Xusifa: we sxa:ḏiri sifazo	*ni kaθi:ri ntazi:mo bul̲ḏa:ni*

Version 2: Haji Nur Mohamed Haji Nur's computerized copy

Transliteration:

Line -2
⟨š^{0}tay^{0}n^{0}zi ğ$_{l}$ada'da ma'siti⟩
Shṯe:nzi cha Ḏa:ḏa Ma:siṯi

Line -1
⟨rḍiya 'll^{2}uhu ʿan^{0}ha'⟩
Raḍiya 'Allahu anhā

Line 1–2, verse 1
⟨daʾda maʾsiti n^{0}saw^{0}may^{0}l$_{l}$a duʿaway$_{l}$^{0} nisaʿiy^{0}di niʾʔa l$_{l}$i ʿadi naʾ ni⟩
Ḏa:ḏa Ma:siṯi nso:meła ḏuʾawe ni saʾi:ḏi ni a:li Aḏna:ni

Line 3–4, verse 2
⟨way$_{l}$^{0} niğ$_{l}$iy^{0}kul$_{l}$u ğ$_{l}$am^{0}t^{t}um^{2}ay$_{l}$^{0} m^{0}ḥam^{2}adi niʾʔa m^{2}aʾ ni yawa ʾ n^{0}t^{t}u ʾʔ$_{i}$i ḥ^{0}saʾ ni⟩
We ni chi:kulu cha Mtume Mhamaḏi ni ama:ni ya wa:nt^{h}u ihsa:ni

Line 5–6, verse 3
⟨n^{0}di way$_{l}$^{0} kan^{0}zi yakaʾ yi nab$_{l}$y^{0}n^{0}da w^{0} za w^{0} niğida ʾ ri yakul^{2}a ʾʔ$_{i}$i y^{0}maʾ ni⟩
Nḏiwe kanzi ya ka:i[*na*] *mpe:nḏozo ni jiḏa:ri ya kul̲la ima:ni*

Line 7–8, verse 4
⟨ḫ^{0}b$_{l}$ay^{0}n^{0}daw^{0}waʾway^{0} nifar^{0}ḍi maw^{0}ğah^{0} hadiy^{0} l$_{l}$aw^{0} taʿaʾ l$_{l}$ay$_{l}$^{a} kar^{0} ka qur^{0} ʾʔa ni⟩
Xpenḏowa: we ni farði Mo:ja haḏi:= =le Ṯaʾa:la karka Qurʾa:ni

Line 9–10, verse 5
⟨šaw^{0} ḫub$_{l}$ay^{0}n^{0}da nimuw^{0}n^{0}t^{t}u šaw^{0} di y^{0}ni nimağaʾ hil$_{l}$i wa y^{0}y^{n}ay$_{l}$^{0} ʿiṣ^{0}yaʾ ni⟩
Sho xupe:nḏa ni mu:nt^{h}u sho ḏi:ni ni maja:hili wenye ʾisiya:ni

Line 11, verse 6
⟨ḫuṣifaʾ wa y$_{l}$^{0} s^{0}qaʾdiri ṣiy^{0}fazaw^{0}⟩
Xusifa: we sxa:ḏiri sifazo

Translation:

[Line -2, version 2. Poem of Dada Masiti]

[Line -1, version 2. May God be pleased with her]

1. Dada Masiti, pray for me, you blessed descendant of Adnani

2. You, who are a grandchild of the Prophet Muḥammad, are a sacred trust for people who know gratitude.

3. You are a treasure to be jealously preserved and love for you is the foundation of all faith.

4. To love you is a religious duty: God the Most High said so in the Qurʾān

5. Those who do not love you are people without faith, ignorant and refractory

6. I cannot give your rightful description: your qualities are not mentioned even in the Buldan.

Comparison between the two texts in Ajami:

The manuscript of version 1 contains some calligraphic notes at the beginning of lines 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 and at the end of lines 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11. These are used as sentence markers, in a similar fashion as in Qur'anic manuscripts. Since the available copy was copied over and over again, and since it was a black and white copy, these seem to be no longer readable. Originally, they were written in red colour. At the top of Version 2, the number 170 is written, which is simply the page number of the original volume this page was copied from.

Line -2, version 2 is a name-like summary for the poem. This is not a title properly speaking, since poems like these usually do not have titles.

Line -1, version 2. This phrase is an Arabic blessing. The writer made a mistake writing *ʾAlluhu* instead of *ʾAllāhu*.

Line 1. The first version gives the word *nsomela* without the initial nasal sound (*somela*) and lengthens its final syllable (*la*:). It also lengthens the word *du'a* (*du'a*:) according to spoken prosody rules. Note that in both versions monosyllabic *ni* is attached to following word. This is normal practice in Chimi:ni written in Ajami also for other monosyllables (see *cha* in the following line and other cases throughout the text).

Line 2. Only the computerized version shows the special sign (ڷ) in the word *chi:kulu*. In both versions the Arabic loanword *ihsa:ni* is written according to original Arabic spelling (*ʾiḥsān*). The same is noticeable with *farði* (written with ض in line 4), as well as with *isiya:ni* (line 5) and the root *sifa* (line 6), both written with ص.

Line 3. The manuscript version gives a raised nasal in the first word (*ndiwe*) and omits it altogether at beginning of *mpe:nḏozo*. The computerized version inserts an additional word (*na*) in this line (*na mpe:nḏozo*).

Line 4. The manuscript has *haḏi:le*, whereas the computerized text has *haḏi:lo*. The word is split between the two half-lines.

Line 5. The manuscript gives a long final *u*: in *mu:nt^{h}u*.

Line 6. The manuscript has *sxa:ḏiri* (written according to Chimi:ni pronunciation), whereas the computerized text has *sqa:ḏiri* (following the original Arabic).

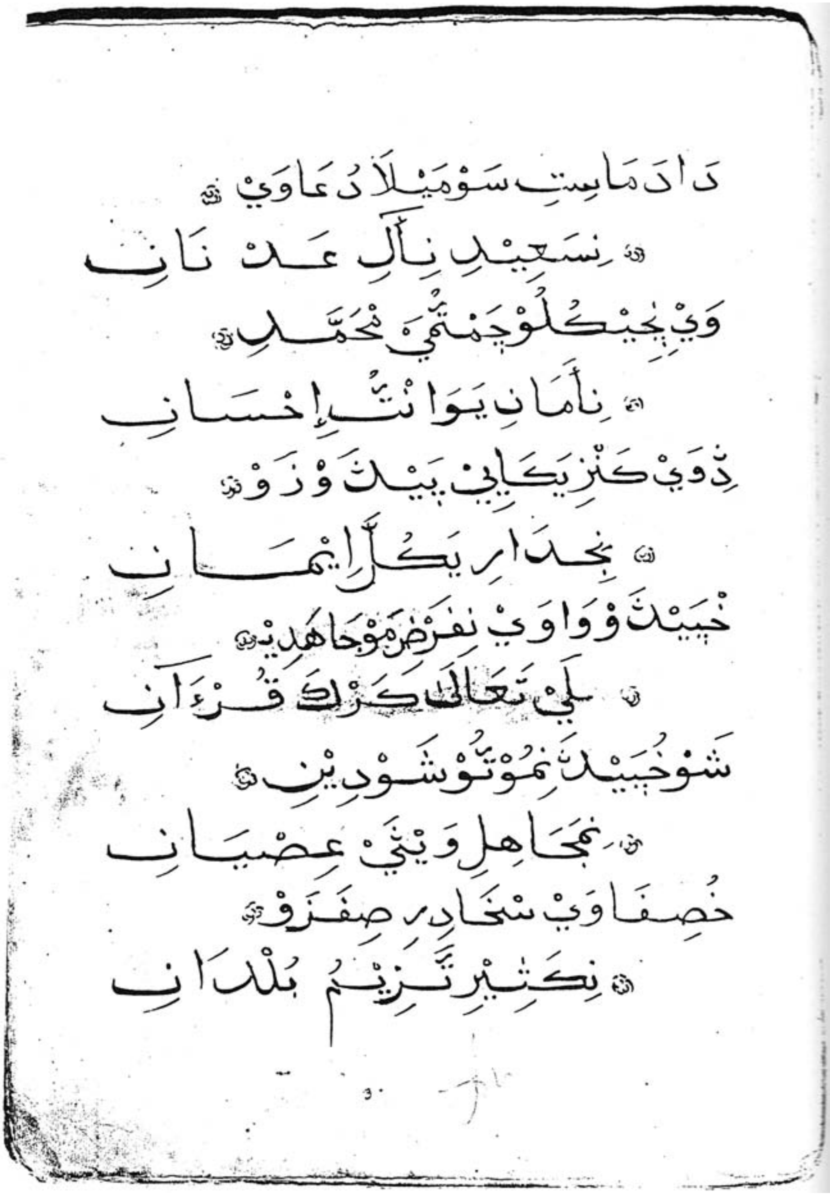


Fig. 1 First page of Sheikh Qasim al-Barawi's poem "Dada Masiti, pray for me" (in the hand of Shego Bakari, late 1930s).


١٧٠

{{شْتَيْنْزِ چَدَادَ مَاسِتِ}}

رَضِيَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهَا

*****

دَادَ مَاسِتِ نْسَوْمَيْلْ دُعَ وَىْ
نِسَعِيْدِ نِأَ لِ عَدِ نَا نِ
وَىْ نِچِيْكُلْ چَمْتُمَّىْ مْحَمَّدِ
نِأَ مَّا نِ يَوَا نْتُ إِ حْسَا نِ
نْدِ وَىْ كَنْزِ يَكَا يِ نَپِيْنْدَ وْ زَ وْ
نِجِدَ ا رِ يَكُلَّ إِ يْمَا نِ
خْپَيْنْدَوْوَاوَيْ نِفَرْضِ مَوْجَهْ هَدِيْ
لْوْ تَعَا لَىٰ كَرْ كَ قُرْ أَ نِ
شَوْ خُپَيْنْدَ نِمُوْنْتُ شَوْ دِ يْنِ
نِمَجَا هِلِ وَ يِيَّىْ عِصْيَا نِ
خُصِفَا وَ ىْ سْقَادِرِ صِيْفَزَوْ

Fig. 2 First page of Sheikh Qasim al-Barawi's poem "Dada Masiti, pray for me" (computerized collection by Haji Nur Mohamed Haji Nur, 2002).

SWAHILI DOCUMENTS FROM CONGO (19TH CENTURY): VARIATION IN ORTHOGRAPHY

Xavier Luffin

1. Introduction

When in the 1860s the Omani and Swahili traders arrived in the eastern part of what is now the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), they brought many changes in the area: new trade routes, new ways of clothing and building houses, new kinds of trees and plants and agricultural techniques, a new lingua franca, Swahili, and a new religion, Islam. Another important innovation, though less known and less studied by scholars, was the use of Arabic script, which was adopted to write two languages: Arabic and Swahili.

At first, the use of Arabic script was limited to the traders themselves, who exchanged information about business and local politics. But slowly, some local chiefs, especially in the Uele area, understood the positive impact that this innovation could have on their way of ruling, and they adopted it through the services of Arabic-speaking clerks. Later on, some Islamic schools were established as well, enabling indigenous individuals to learn how to read and write Arabic. So, when the first Europeans explored the area and developed contacts with Omani and Swahili traders, from the end of the 1870s onward, but also with some local chiefs, they exchanged information through interpreters and translators who could read Arabic and Swahili, and answer in the same languages, too.[1]

Several museums and archives in Belgium still hold such documents. All of them date back to the last two decades of the 19th century, and are to be found in the Historical Archives of the Royal Museum of Central Africa (MRAC), Tervuren. Some other Belgian institutions, such as the African Archives (AA) of the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Library of the University of Liège (ULg), and the Army Museum (MRA) in Brussels, also contain some interesting documents.

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[1] For a general overview of the use of Arabic and written Swahili in the Congo, see Luffin (2004: 149 f., 2007: 17 f.).

The Swahili documents which have survived up till now come from three parts of the Congo: Stanley Falls, Marungu, and Uele. Some of them were brought back to Europe as official archives, for instance the set of treaties signed in Marungu, which is now in the African Archives of the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Other documents were sent by Swahili traders or local chiefs to European officers, who then kept them as personal archives. Finally, other papers were either intercepted or found in Swahili settlements like Kasongo or Nyangwe, during the battles of the 'Arab campaign'—a war between the colonial authorities and the Arab and Swahili traders between 1892 and 1894—and then brought back to Belgium by the European officers.

In this paper, I will focus on the orthography—or rather, the orthographies—of the Swahili documents.

2. A Short History of the Documents

The main Swahili documents originating from eastern Congo (Stanley Falls District), called here group A, are a dozen letters, written between 1884 and 1893, kept today in the MRAC, the MRA, and the Library of the ULg. Some of them were sent by Swahili traders to their companions, while some others were sent to the European representatives of the EIC (*Etat Indépendant du Congo*, Congo Free State), like Nicolas Tobback (1859–1905), a Belgian officer who was the 'résident' (i.e., the EIC representative) at Stanley Falls from 1888 till 1892.

Other documents come from Marungu—the area southwest of Lake Tanganyika, facing Karema (group B). They consist of five bilingual treaties in Swahili and French, signed between December 1884 and February 1885 by local chiefs (Kansawara, Uondo, Manda, Chanza, and Zongwe) and Emile Storms (1846–1918), the Belgian representative of the *Association internationale africaine* (AIA), who stayed in Marungu from 1883 till 1885 and founded the station of Mpala. The five chiefs belonged to the Rungu people. Emile Storms was the explorer of the Marungu area and the founder of posts like Mpala. The five documents are now kept in the *Archives africaines* of the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and two copies of the first three treaties are kept in the MRAC.

The five documents follow a similar pattern: the date according to the Swahili Muslim calendar;[2] the names of the representatives of both parts;

[2] The Arabic names of the months (*ṣafar*, *rabīʿ al-ʾawwal*, *rabīʿ aṯ-ṯānī*) are replaced by their Swahili counterparts, *mfunguo tano*, *sita*, *saba*.

the acknowledgement of the AIA authority by the African chief; the mention of the *hongo* (a symbolic tribute paid as a sign of submission); the mention of a European witness, either Father Isaac Moinet (1849–1908), or the German explorer Paul Reichard (1854–1938); the signatures of several representatives of both parts.

Finally, among a set of documents written in Arabic, two Swahili letters coming from the Uele Basin, in north-eastern Congo (group C), should be mentioned, which were brought back to Belgium by Guillaume De Bauw (1865–1914), a Belgian officer at the service of the Congo Free State in the Uele area from 1897 to 1900. The first document is a bifolio containing copies of five texts, one in Arabic and four in Swahili. A sentence in Arabic written on the front page states that the texts are a copy made by a certain *Karakara*. The four Swahili texts are actually copies of letters—more precisely parts of letters.

Some testimonies tell us of the use of Arabic script by Msiri (c. 1830–1891), the King of Garengazwe in Katanga, who dictated some letters to Swahili traders established at his court (Luffin 2004: 155), but none of these supposed documents have reached us.

Most of the documents—the letters, actually—mention the date of their composition. They all date back to a period going from 1884 till 1899. However, we can imagine that documents in Swahili and Arabic circulated as early as the arrival of the first Omani and Swahili traders in eastern Congo, probably in the 1860s. Saʿīd ibn ʿAlī al-Muġīrī, an Omani historian, includes in his book on the history of East Africa, *Ǧuhaynat al-ʾaḫbār fī tārīḫ Zinǧibār*, the transcription of an oral testimony about the arrival of the first Omani in eastern Congo, where he mentions the exchange of letters between these traders in the years 1860 (Luffin 2008: 457).

3. Orthography

If we look at the various Swahili documents written in Arabic script coming from all over East Africa, we note that the orthography was not standardized, each clerk following his own rules, some of them using the standard Arabic script (see for instance Dammann 1993), others trying to include additional symbols (see for instance Abdulaziz 1979; Miehe 2004). However, a basic common rule is that the text is always vocalized, whereas a similar Arabic text would only represent the consonants.

If we look at the documents of the group A, we should first say a word about the structure of these letters. All of them follow the same pattern and

are very similar to the Swahili letters found elsewhere at the same period (see Damman 1993). They start with an isolated religious formula in Arabic, usually *bi-manni-hi taʿālā* 'by the grace of [God] the very High', sometimes *bi-smi llāhi r-raḥmāni r-raḥīm* 'In the name of God the Merciful the Compassionate'. Then, a sentence in Arabic, usually one or two lines, contains the name of the addressee introduced by redundant honorific formulas (e.g. الى جناب الشيخ المحب الاكرم المكرم الأحشم الأخ *ʾilā ǧanāb aš-šayḫ al-muḥibb al-ʾakram al-mukrim al-ʾaḥšam al-ʾaḫ* 'to his Majesty the dear, generous, respected and pious sheikh and brother so-and-so …') and salutations. Then comes the Swahili text, usually introduced by the expression فيما بعد *fīmā baʿdu* or وبعد *wa-baʿdu* 'after that', and the expression نَكُعَرِفُ ⟨nakuʿarifu⟩ *nakuarifu* 'I inform you that …'. After the text of the letter itself, the document switches to Arabic again: the author greets other persons living in the city of the addressee (سلم لنا على المشائخ *sallim lanā ʿalā l-mašāʾiḫ* 'greet the sheikhs so-and-so …'), then the text ends with the name of the author, introduced by a formula like من أخيك *min ʾaḫīka* 'from your brother so-and-so', or كتبه الحقير *kataba-hu l-ḥaqīr* 'written by the humble so-and-so', accompanied by the date in the Islamic calendar. If necessary, the author often uses the right margin to end the text. This structure is exactly the same as that in the Swahili letters of the same period found elsewhere in East Africa (see for instance Büttner 1892).

These documents normally use the Arabic script without additional letters, which means that some letters have two values, like غ for Arabic [ɣ] and for [ŋg] like in واغُ ⟨wʾġu⟩ *wangu* 'my' and ش for [ʃ] and [nj], as in مِيشُ ⟨myšu⟩ *mwisho* 'end' and شِمَ ⟨šima⟩ *njema* 'good'. The long vowel is usually used to render the stress, as in خَبارِ ⟨ḫabʾri⟩ *habari* 'news', though not systematically: تفضل ⟨tfḍl⟩ *tafazali* 'please'. The [w] is often omitted like in مِيشُ ⟨miyšu⟩ *mwisho* 'end' and بَانَ ⟨baʾna⟩ *bwana* 'sir', but we do not know whether this means that it was omitted in the pronunciation as well, or if it was an orthographical rule.

Regarding the vowels, *kasra* (ِ◌) usually stands for [i] and [e], as in مِيمِ ⟨miymi⟩ *mimi* 'I' and وُمُلِتِي ⟨wumulitiy⟩ *umulete* 'you bring me', *ḍamma* (ُ◌) for [u] and [o] like in بَرُوَ ⟨baruwa⟩ *barua* 'letter' and يَكُ ⟨yaku⟩ *yako* 'your', and *fatḥa* (َ◌) for [a], as in بَرُوَ ⟨baruwa⟩ *barua* 'letter', but sometimes it may render [e] too, like in شَمَ ⟨*šama*⟩ *njema* 'good'.

Most of the Arabic loanwords keep their original orthography, although we do find words like خَبارِ ⟨ḫabʾri⟩ *habari* 'news', modified to render the stress. We also find cases of code-switching from Swahili to Arabic, or Arabic

compounds in a Swahili sentence, like بلد كَسُفوغُ ⟨bld kasufwġu⟩ [sic] *balad Kasongo* 'the city of Kasongo'.

Regarding the documents of the group B, we have to mention that the two sets of treaties have been written by two different clerks. The writing is different, as well as the orthographic rules. The clerk of the documents in the African Archives often uses a long vowel to mark the stress, like in *bwana* 'sir' or *mtemi* 'chief' (بوان ⟨bw'n⟩, متيم ⟨mtym⟩), along with one additional letter, پ for [p], though not systematically. All other consonants represent one sound, except غ which may be *ġayn* in an Arabic loanword (though not attested here), or [ng] in a Swahili word, like مْزُغُ ⟨m^{0}zuġu⟩ *mzungu* 'European', but may also be rendered by two consonants, as in مَهُونغُ ⟨mahuwnġu⟩ for *mahongo* 'tribute'. Regarding the vowels, *fatḥa* (◌َ) is used to express both [a] and [e], as in بُوانَ ⟨buw'na⟩ for *bwana* 'sir' and ياكَ ⟨y'ka⟩ *yake* 'his', *ḍamma* (◌ُ) to express [u] and [o], as in وَزُغُ ⟨wazuġu⟩ for *wazungu* 'Europeans' and مَهُونغُ ⟨mahuwnġu⟩ for *mahongo* 'tribute', and *kasra* (◌ِ) to express [i], as in وَكيلِ ⟨wakyl⟩ for *wakili* 'representative'. Finally, the prefix *m-* is often rendered as *mu-*, as in بُوانَ ⟨buw'na⟩ for *bwana* 'sir'.

The clerk of the documents in the Historical Archives of the Royal Museum of Central Africa (MRAC) adopts other orthographical rules. Regarding the vowels, [e] may be rendered by *fatḥa* (◌َ) but also by *kasra* (◌ِ), as in اَمَفَنيزَ ⟨'mafanyza⟩ *amefaniza* 'he did', and متِمِ ⟨mtimi⟩ *mtemi* 'chief', while *ḍamma* (◌ُ) stands for [u] and [o] and *kasra* (◌ِ) stands also for [i]. Regarding the consonants, the clerk does not use any additional letter and he often renders [p] as ك, as in تُكَتِ ⟨tukti⟩ *tupate* 'we receive'. Sometimes, he uses two letters to render the same phoneme, without any clear reason, like ح and ه for [h] and ك and ق for [k]. Unlike the documents in the African Archives, the MRAC documents render the prefix *m-*.

The two clerks also often adopt two orthographies for the same word, e.g. *shahidi* 'witness' written شَحِد ⟨šaḥid⟩, or شَيْدِ ⟨šay^{0}di⟩ in the MRAC documents, while we find *shauri* 'council' written as شَووْرِ ⟨šaww^{0}ri⟩ or شَوُرِ ⟨šawuri⟩ in the African Archives.

Generally, the author of the documents in the African Archives respects the orthographic rules of the Arabic loanwords, like سعدالله ⟨s'd 'll'h⟩, رمضان ⟨rmḍ'n⟩ for *Ramazani* and *Sadala*, unlike the second who writes them as سَدَلَ ⟨sadala⟩, رَمَاذَنِ ⟨rama'dani⟩. The author of the African Archives documents also uses Arabic loanwords that do not seem to be very usual, like *ǧamīʿ* (جَميع ⟨ǧmyʿ⟩) for 'all', and even introduces Arabic structures in the

Swahili text, like a word preceded by the Arabic article, *as-sulṭān* السلطان ⟨'lsulṭ'n⟩ for 'chief'.

Concerning the texts of group C, the clerk uses the three standard Arabic vowels and the *sukūn* (◌ْ). The *fatḥa* (◌َ) renders [a], the *ḍamma* (◌ُ) renders [u] and [o], as in سُلْطانِ ⟨sulṭ'ni⟩ *sultani* 'chief' and ياكُ ⟨y'ku⟩ *yako* 'yours', and *kasra* (◌ِ) renders [i] and [e], حَالِ ⟨ḥ'li⟩ *hali* 'state' and وِوِ ⟨wiwi⟩ *wewe* 'you'.

Regarding the consonants, the clerk uses the standard letters of Arabic plus two additional letters, پ and ڤ, to render respectively [p] and [v], as in ڤتُ ڤِزُرِ ⟨f$_2$tu f$_2$izuri⟩ *vitu vizuri* 'nice things' and مْپِنْدَ ⟨m^{0}b$_1$nda⟩ *mpinda* 'bend'. However, the use of these two additional consonants is not systematic, since we find for instance the word *pamoja* 'together' written as بَمُجَ ⟨bamuǧa⟩.

All other consonants represent one sound, except غ which may be *ġayn* in an Arabic loanword (though not attested here), or [ng] in a Swahili word, like مْزُغُ ⟨m^{0}zuġu⟩ *mzungu* 'European'.

Generally, the author of these letters keeps the consonantal orthography of the Arabic loanwords, but with the Swahili ending vowel, which is mainly *i*, as in سُلْطانِ ⟨sulṭ'ni⟩ *sultani* 'chief', حَالِ ⟨ḥ'li⟩ *hali* 'state', or تَفَضَلِ ⟨tfḍali⟩ *tafazali* 'please'. However, this is not systematic, since we find for instance اِحْسَنِ ⟨'iḥsani⟩ instead of اِحْسانِ ⟨'iḥs'ni⟩ for *ihsani* 'kindness'. Again, Arabic expressions are found inside a Swahili sentence, as a code switching, like this strange form: فِي شَهر قَلِلِ ⟨fy šahr qalili⟩ *fī šahr qalili* 'after some months[?]'.

Unlike most of the other documents, the use of a long vowel as a stress marker is rare, as shown in most of the examples mentioned above, although we find ياكُ ⟨y'ku⟩ for *yako* 'yours'. Finally, the clerk himself does not always use the same orthographical rules, since we find for instance يَكُ ⟨yaku⟩ and ياكُ ⟨y'ku⟩ for *yako* 'yours'.

4. Conclusion

Although the Swahili documents which reached our times are quite limited in quantity, one notes a high degree of variation in their orthography: some clerks use the canonical Arabic alphabet, others introduce additional letters. The two additional letters we find in the Congolese documents are the same which are in use in the Persian tradition, while in some other Swahili areas we find more developed changes (see for instance Abdulaziz 1979: 74). These additional signs are not uncommon in Swahili documents from the rest of East Africa (compare with Büttner 1892). The vowel system is rather stable, though [e] is rendered by both *fatḥa* (◌َ) and *kasra* (◌ِ).

Some clerks retain the canonical spelling of Arabic loanwords, others adopt a spelling which is closer to their Swahili pronunciation. This leads us to wonder whether they pronounced the loanwords as they would do it in Arabic, or if this spelling was purely etymological. But the influence of Arabic may often be stronger, some clerks including Arabic expressions or words compounds—not always correctly however—inside a Swahili sentence.

The orthography does not vary from one clerk to another alone: in several cases, the same person uses two different spellings for the same word, in the same text.

Finally, the spelling may give us some information about the way the writers would 'feel' the grammar of their language, for instance when they write words like the conjunction *na* and the genitive marker *ya* (spelled as independent words in modern Swahili) as prefixes, together with the following word.

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AKHI PATIA KALAMU: WRITING SWAHILI POETRY IN ARABIC SCRIPT*

Clarissa Vierke

Introduction

The aim of this article is twofold: firstly, I will give a brief historical overview of Swahili in Arabic script. Secondly, I will explore an aspect of Swahili in Arabic script that has hardly ever been considered, namely the question of how poetic language shapes its presentation in script and how script shapes poetic language. I will show that Swahili notions of poetry and its representation in Arabic script are often strongly intertwined.

1. Overview

1.1. *The Earliest Samples of Swahili Writing*

Arabic script has been in use in the Swahili city states along the East African coast for centuries (Allen 1970: viii; Hichens 1939: 119). The Lamu chronicle reports that early 'Arab' settlers on Lamu exchanged letters in the 7th century (Hichens 1938). The oldest preserved writings can be found on coins of the coastal Sultanates as well as in stone inscriptions dating back to the 12th and 13th centuries (Hichens 1939: 119). Although most of the inscriptions consist of Arabic formulas and names, which do not unequivocally indicate whether Swahili was also written at that time, there are some ancient epigraphs which also contain Swahili names (Omar and Frankl 1997: 56).

As shown by artworks and inscriptions in stone, ivory and metal, the art of writing had reached a high standard by the 17th century (Hichens 1939: 120), but it needs to be added that the highly specialized inscriptions hardly provide evidence of the everyday usage of Arabic script (Gerhardt 2005: 4). It is only in the 18th century that we find more substantial (paper) proof of

* I thank Ruth Schubert for correcting the English text of this article.

Swahili texts being written in Arabic script (Whiteley 1969: 38; Miehe 1990: 202).[1] The oldest Swahili writings that have come to light are a number of letters found in Goa dating back to 1724 (Allen 1970: viii; Boxer 1957; Omar & Frankl 1994). The largest body of ancient texts in Swahili in Arabic script, however, is poetry.

Although there are versions of the *Utendi wa Ayubu* that might be even older (Parker 1979), a manuscript of the narrative epic poem *Utendi wa Tambuka*, which has been dated back to 1728, has often been mentioned as the earliest written poem to have been preserved (Dammann 1993: 30).[2] The manuscript of the *Hamziya*, a translation of an Arabic poem, is considered to have been written in 1749 (Harries 1952: 59).[3] Manuscripts of the *Utendi wa Katirifu* (Knappert 1968–1969: 99; Miehe 1979: 15) and the acrostic poem *Wanjiwanji* (Knappert 1969)[4] were reported to have been written in the middle of the 18th century.[5] The manuscript of the *Takhmisi ya Liyongo* purchased by the British Library in 1891 also seems to be among the oldest preserved Swahili manuscripts (Zhukov 2001).[6]

Even though manuscript evidence only reaches back to the 18th century, the manuscripts show such perfection of style and often make such conventionalized references to writing, that it has repeatedly been assumed that writing Swahili poetry in Arabic script must have been an established practice by then. In the absence of further evidence, the exact time depth has been estimated differently by different authors: while Andrej Zhukov (1992: 60) suggests that it was not only the unfavourable climatic conditions of the coast that a lot of manuscripts fell victim to, but also a large number of manuscripts must have been destroyed during the Portuguese occupa-

[1] Werner 1920: 25: "No mss. of any great antiquity are known to be in existence, and the only one mentioned (so far as I am aware) by the Portuguese historians of the 15th and 16th centuries was written in Arabic". She refers to the chronicle of Kilwa.

[2] For a critical comment on the dating of the manuscript, see Zhukow (1988, 1992). For critical editions, see Meinhof (1911–1912), Knappert (1958).

[3] Hichens gives the date 1792 (Knappert 1966: 53). Knappert (1989: 74) even talks of a manuscript from 1652. For a published edition, see Knappert (1966).

[4] Knappert believes that this (lost?) manuscript is the one that the famous comparative philologist Sir William Jones brought to Trinity College, Dublin. Werner (1920: 25) refers to the text as follows: "We know, from a casual reference by Sir William Jones (Asiatic Researches, Vol. 11) that at least one religious poem in Swahili was extant before 1783; but this has not hitherto been traced" (see also Werner 1917–1920: 114).

[5] Another old poem preserved in manuscripts of a more recent date is the *Inkishafi*. The oldest surviving manuscript was written in 1853 (Hichens 1939: 109).

[6] Meinhof (1924–1925) used it for his critical edition of the *Takhmisi*.

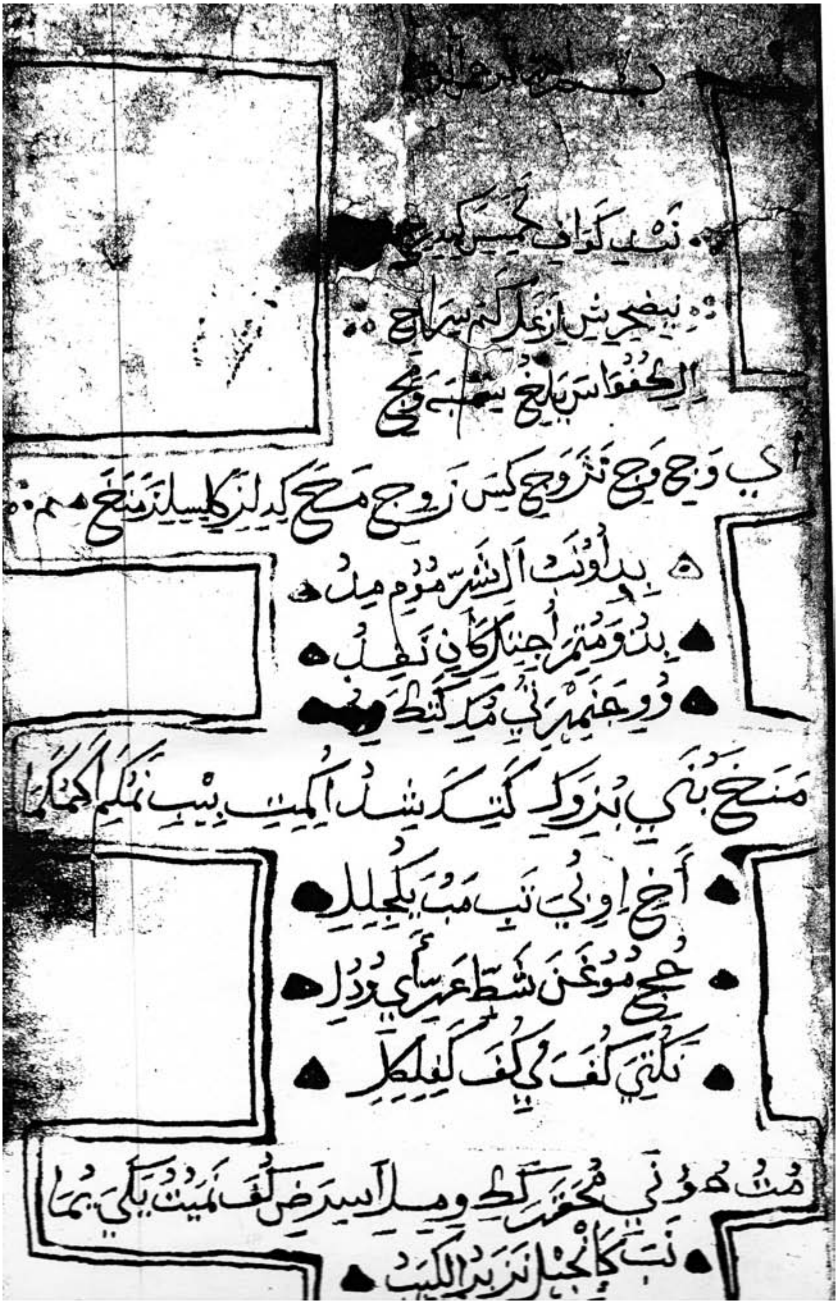


Fig. 1: *Takhmisi ya Liyongo*, ms OR 4534, British Library London

tion, J.W.T. Allen (1970) considers the possibility that Swahili was not even committed to writing before the year 1700.[7]

One also needs to keep in mind that the age of the texts and the manuscripts do not need to be congruent. While the poems attributed to the mythical hero Fumo Liyongo are probably the most ancient texts from the coast that have been preserved—Werner (1920: 5) dates them back to the 13th century—the oldest manuscripts of Liyongo songs, which had mostly been transmitted orally, date back only to the 18th or 19th centuries (see Miehe et al. 2004). Leaving problems of deciphering the dates given in manuscripts aside (Zhukow 1988, 1992), it is the discrepancy between the fluid nature of text that is subject to constant transmission, and the written rendering of it, which suggests fixity, that renders ambivalent the reference to dates often given in the colophon of manuscripts: does the date refer to the day of composition of the text, or rather to the day of copying it? Thus, it does not come as a surprise that for the ancient poems we often find conflicting dates in the research literature—some of which have been transformed from hypotheses into facts (cf. also Parker 1979).

Geographically, the oldest manuscripts of poems come from the Lamu archipelago on the so-called Northern Swahili coast, most particularly the city states of Pate and Lamu. The flourishing craft of writing and scribing in the 18th and 19th centuries echoes the general economic and cultural renaissance of Pate and Lamu after the rather sterile period of Portuguese occupation (Allen 1974: 120). In the hierarchical Swahili societies, reading and writing was part of a canon of learning and a means of patrician distinction. A surrounding material culture and practices of producing writing utensils indicate the degree of professionalization in the craft of writing—a material culture that is sometimes referred to in poems, as the following prologue from the *Utendi wa Katirifu* (Hichens 1939: 121) shows.[8]

[7] Allen (1970: viii): "The date of writing Swahili in Arabic script is not known. The earliest known manuscript written in Swahili is dated 1724 and was recently found in Goa by Dr. Edward Alpers. It may be that Swahili was not written at all much before the year 1700 and then for some time in restricted uses and restricted areas. This does not mean that the works then committed to writing were necessarily then composed. Some of them are clearly histories, stories and poems that had come down by oral tradition from a much earlier date or that had previously been written in Arabic".

[8] Particularly Siu on the island Pate seems to have been a town with a number of *scriptoria* and developed craftsmanship in book production and manuscript copying of both Arabic and Swahili texts (Allen 1981: 20).

Akhi, patia kalamu	O friend, obtain for me a stylus
Na karatasi ya Shamu	And some Syrian papyrus;
Na kibao muhakamu	A scribing board well-chosen
na upote wa hariri	And some cord of woven silk
Musafi mukidakiki	Let the mica-sand be finely ground.
Mukitowaza ibaki	So that it may be adhesive,
Wino usitah'raki	That the black ink may not smear,
iwe jema zinjifuri	That the red ink may be fair

As reflected in the poem, the scribes used pens made of reed, millet or feather quills (*kalamu*) (see also Knappert 1989: 78). Paper (*karatasi*) was locally produced from cotton (Knappert 1989: 77), but was later commonly imported from England, Venice (cf. Digby 1975: 54) or probably Syria (*Shamu*).[9] To line the paper, scribes would use a board (*kibao*) around which parallel silk cords (*upote wa hariri*) were wrapped (cf. also Knappert 1989: 78; Biersteker & Plane 1989: 457). The paper was pressed on the *kibao*, so that the cords left an impression of lines on the paper, which would facilitate accurate writing. Fine and clean glittering mica-sand (*musafi*) was sprinkled upon wet ink to dry it, but also to achieve a glittering effect. Black ink (*wino*) was locally produced from rice (Hichens 1939: 122; Knappert 1989: 78) or from the bark of trees (Dammann 1940: 92), while red ink (*zenjefuri*) was made from mercuric oxide or from cinnabar.[10]

1.2. *Two Scripts in Competition*

From the 1840s onwards, a competing sign system, Roman script, was slowly introduced together with Christianization and later colonization. The German missionary Johann Ludwig Krapf, "the first to commit Swahili to writing", as he writes (Krapf 1882: xiv), at first considered the introduction of the Ethiopian alphabet as a possible option for Swahili. Besides his admiration for Ethiopian writing culture, it was also his distrust of the Arabic script, which he, and later others, suspected of fostering the proliferation of Islam, which made him look for other possibilities. Finally, he chose the

9 Without any concrete evidence, but probably building on oral history, Hichens (1939: 122) explains that "in early times writing was done upon a papyrus made from the split leaves of palms. […] From the eighteenth century onwards Swahili scribes frequently wrote their works upon British hand-made paper of high quality".

10 Likewise, logwood dye from mangrove trees, an East African speciality (Digby 1975: 52), was used to gain a red colour (Stigand 1913: 150; Digby 1975: 52). There is also a plant called *mzinjifuri* (Hichens 1939: 122).

Roman script, in view of the prospect of European colonization. In 1849, Johann Ludwig Krapf published his translation of the first three chapters of the Bible—the first printed document representing Swahili in Roman script (cf. Omar & Frankl 1997: 56). Up to the end of the 19th century, a number of grammars, exercise books and works of Christian literature in Swahili in Roman script came out.

In German East Africa, Roman script was officially introduced to the exclusion of Arabic script in 1899 (Gerhard 2005: 13). However, even at the turn of the century, Arabic script was still very much in use, even reaching into the interior (Omar & Frankl 1997: 57). Though propagating the use of Roman script, missionaries and also colonial officers accepted *nolens volens* the *de facto* presence of Arabic script in everyday life. As early as 1876, Bishop Steere published a small teaching manual entitled *The Arabic alphabet as used in writing Swahili*, for Europeans who needed to "be able to read letters and whatever else one may meet with in the old characters" (Steere 1876: 3). In 1892, Carl Büttner, the first lecturer in Swahili at the Seminar of Oriental Languages in Berlin published *Suaheli-Schriftstücke in arabischer Schrift*, a teaching manual for merchants and future colonial officers that was meant to "bridge the gap between Europeans and the East Africans" (Büttner 1892: 154, 155). A number of other manuals were to follow (Central African Mission 1895; Neuhaus 1896; Velten 1901; Beech 1914: 3ff.; Allen 1945; Williamson 1947), which show that despite all efforts to introduce the Roman script quickly, the Arabic script was still very much in use in letters, contracts and other writings at the beginning of the 20th century.[11]

In fact, it seems that at least for a short time some missionaries might have even considered Arabic script as an option for reaching the local population. In 1897, the CMS missionary William Taylor made Muhamadi Kijuma, one of the most important scribes at that time (cf. Miehe & Vierke 2010), write the Gospel of St. John in Arabic script (reprinted by the British and Foreign Bible Society in 1914) (see Coldham 1966, entries 2831 and 2832).

Furthermore, there were also a number of missionary-scholars and colonial officers, such as William Taylor, Edward Steere, Ernst Dammann and J.W.T. Allen, to name but a few, who had a philological interest in a manuscript culture that they found highly fascinating.[12] They were the first to

[11] Omar & Frankl (1997: 58) also mention a text entitled *Raha isiyo Karaha* 'Unhampered Happiness' in both Latin and Arabic script written by William Taylor in 1893.

[12] On the history of research in Swahili philology, see Miehe (2010).



Fig. 2: Frontispiece of the Gospel of St. John (*Injili kama alivyoleta Yohanna* 'The Gospel as transmitted by John') by Muhamadi Kijuma[13]

collect, edit and preserve Swahili manuscripts—an effort which in the long run resulted in a paradox: in the course of the 20th century, Swahili in Arabic script was preserved and commented on in published editions of texts and became part of a European academic tradition and an established branch of philology, while it gradually lost its importance in Eastern Africa. There have been more critical editions and publications of Swahili texts in Arabic script in Europe than in Africa.[14] Ironically, the production of manuscripts was strongly stimulated by the moderate but steady European demand. Most of the Swahili manuscripts kept in Hamburg, London and Berlin today were produced in that period (cf. Vierke 2010).

Unlike some African languages written in Arabic script, like, for instance, Hausa in Ajami, which has also been adapted to the sphere of the print media, in the case of Swahili the Arabic script was tied to the manuscript culture on the Swahili coast, which steadily lost ground due to the increasing presence of the print media which fostered the use of standard Swahili in Roman script. From the end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s missionaries and officials of the British colonial administration started to

[13] I thank Ahmed Sheikh Nabhany (Mombasa) for a copy of the manuscript.

[14] For a chronology of editions of traditional Swahili narrative poetry, see Miehe (2010).

unify orthography in Latin script, adopting it officially for the newly created standard Swahili which they propagated in the media and in the education system. Formal school education using the medium of Latin script replaced traditional institutions of learning, which were crucial to the teaching of Arabic script. Swahili in Arabic script became associated with a sphere of folklore and dialects that were complementary to a modern national and standardized Swahili.

In the course of the 20th century, the manuscript culture slowly eroded. Up to the first third of the 20th century people were highly literate in Arabic script: not only men, but also learned women would meet in private circles to exchange and copy manuscripts, adding them to their private libraries (see also Omar & Frankl 1997: 59).[15] While families used to own huge libraries of both Arabic and Swahili writings, in the 1940s J.W.T. Allen found that the number of manuscripts available had strongly decreased, being neglected by their owners; most were either sold or literally fell apart (cf. Allen 1944).

Today, Swahili in Arabic script is mostly used by conservative Swahili scholars, particularly poets, for whom it is part of their literary heritage and provides access to it but also has a strong symbolical value underlining coastal identity.[16]

1.3. *Writing Swahili Poetry: Translating Sound into Sign*

The incongruence between Swahili and Arabic and the resulting incompatibility of the Arabic script to write Swahili has recurrently been pointed out (e.g. Büttner 1892: 151, 152, Gerhardt 2005: 5 ff.). Not only does Swahili, for instance, differentiate between five vowels, but it also has voiced phonemes (/p/, /v/) and a number of prenasalized plosives (/mb/, /nd/), which do not exist in Arabic, so that the Arabic letter *bāʾ* (ب), for instance, can be read as a representation of /b/, /p/ or /mb/ (also as /pʰ/, [bw], [mbw], [mp], [mpw], [pw]) in Swahili.[17] There have been recurrent efforts to introduce further diacritics and conventions to overcome ambivalences (see Lambert

[15] On the marginalization of Arabic script and a classical canon of Swahili scholarship, see also O'Fahey (2000).

[16] Furthermore, in my experience, Arabic script is the marked choice even for most of the conservative poets, like Ahmed Sheikh Nabhany and Ahmad Nassir Juma Bhalo, who are literate in both scripts and who also commonly stick to Latin script. A counter-example is Mahmoud Mau, a poet from Lamu, who uses Arabic script for most of his compositions.

[17] See Gerhardt (2005) for more examples of ambivalent readings; see also Knappert (1989: 81).

1964; Omar & Frankl 1997) but generally speaking, there has never been a standardized orthography, and writing Swahili in Arabic script is still rather idiosyncratic.[18]

2. Poetic Language and Its Representation in Script

In what follows, I will concentrate on a set of Swahili conventions regarding the visual representation of sound in Arabic script: the arrangement of poetic language. How are features like rhythm and rhyme translated into visual landmarks? As already outlined above, poems are often opened by references to writing and I will show that in the Swahili case poetic features of language are strongly linked to their visual representation.

2.1. *Visualized Rhythm*

To consider how poetic language is made visible, one may start by taking a look at the first page of the *Utendi wa Haudaji*.[19] Even at first glance, the very symmetry in its presentation suggests that the text presented is a poem. Generally speaking, (Swahili) poetic language exhibits a greater regularization of prosodic units, or rhythm, than ordinary speech. The segmentation of language into measured units is echoed by the layout of the page, which is divided into symmetric columns and lines of comparable length.

In the case of the *utendi* (plural *tendi*), the genre of Swahili narrative poetry that is given as an example here, one manuscript line (*mstari*) corresponds to one stanza (*ubeiti*). The stanza in turn is divided into four lines (*kipande*, plural *vipande*) (of two feet each) which make the page fall visually into four columns.

[18] Mwalimu Sikujua, for instance, an important scribe of Swahili poetry and chronicler of oral tradition in the 19th century, marked the difference between alveolar and dental plosives by adding four dots above the letters *tāʾ* and *dāl* when they represented dental plosives. /p/ and /v/ were differentiated from /b/ and /f/ by three dots on *bāʾ* and *fāʾ*. Aspiration, which is phonemic in the Northern Swahili dialects, was marked by a diacritic *hāʾ*, prenasalization by a *mīm* above the character. He also marked /e/ and /o/ (see Omar & Frankl 1997; for samples of Sikujua's writing, see Abdulaziz 1979: 70 ff.; see also Miehe et al. 2004). For Kijuma's diacritics, see Miehe & Vierke (2010). The sample stanza from the *Kishamia* written by Yahya Ali Omar (see below) contains further diacritics.

[19] All the manuscript examples from the *Utendi wa Haudaji* presented in this article are taken from the MS 279888-7, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. For a critical edition of the *Utendi wa Haudaji* and a study of its prosody, see Vierke (2010).



Fig. 3: First page, *Utendi wa Haudaji*, MS 345, 279888-7, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London

2.2. *Measure of Letters*

As outlined above, a letter like *bāʾ* allows different readings, and this has been pointed out as being one of the main ambivalences of Swahili in Arabic script. However, the representation merely follows a different logic from Roman script, namely syllable structure: Arabic letters provide an accurate rendering of the Swahili morae count. Unlike Roman script, Swahili in Arabic script rigidly reflects the syllable count: a consonantal letter (together with its vocalization) invariably representing a Swahili syllable, equivalent to one mora.[20]

If we consider the stanza given below (stz. 122 from the *Utendi wa Haudaji*) in both Roman and Arabic script, we find that in Roman script *bi* and *mbi*, which both have the value of one mora are written with two or three letters respectively, while in Ajami a single consonant *bāʾ* with a vowel sign accounts for both the plosive and the prenasalized plosive followed by *kasra*, echoing their equivalent syllabic value in poetry (CV, NCV and GV syllables invariably correspond to one mora in Swahili).

*Uwa**mbi**e, nimekuya*	Tell them, that I have come,
Maka kwethu nimengiya	I have entered our home Mecca,
*kwa utume wa na**bi**ya,*	on an errand of the prophet,
Muhamaḏi mfadhaa	the excellent Muḥammad.



⟨mu-ḥa-ma-di m^{0}-fa-ḍ̤a-ʔa⟩	⟨ka-wu-tu-mi wa na-**bi**-ya⟩	⟨ma-ka ki-tu ni-mi-ġi-ya⟩	⟨ʾu-wa-**bi**-y^{0} ni-mi-ku-ya⟩

Hence, an *utendi* line (*kipande*), which always consists of eight syllables, invariably consists of eight consonantal letters (e.g. *ʾ-w-b-y n-m-k-y* in the first line and *k-w-t-m-w-n-b-y* in the third line); an *utendi* stanza (*ubeiti*) containing 32 syllables is made up of 32 consonants. This in turn leads to a uniform appearance of verse and line length, giving the impression of symmetrical vertical columns as we have seen—an effect that is hard to

[20] Knappert (1989: 81) describes this principle of orthography "[…] 'herufian', i.e. syllabic, in the sense that every herufi, i.e. consonant-character, represents a syllable never more nor less […]" (cf. also Greenberg 1947: 25).

achieve in Roman script. The representation in Arabic script echoes the strict metric equivalence in an *utendi*: syllable measure (*mizani*) strictly corresponds to the measure of letters.

2.3. *Ear Rhyme and Eye Rhyme*

The Swahili end rhyme is based on the identity of the last syllable. The *utendi* has a strict rhyme scheme: the first three lines (*vipande*) have the same rhyme, while the last line has a different rhyme. While the last syllable of the first three lines changes from stanza to stanza, being *ya* in the line considered above and *ke* in the stanza below (stz. 105 from the *Utendi wa Haudaji*), the rhyme of the last line (often *Ga*) runs through the whole poem, creating a bond across stanzas (schematically: aaax, bbbx, cccx).

kuwatwaa wake wake	[I have come] to fetch his wives
pamwe na zijana zake	together with his children.
walezi wayapulike,	The foster parents should hear [my words],
mbwa, wen̪do majuhaa!	o you dog, companion of the ignorants.



⟨m^{0}ba widu mağuh**aʾʔa**⟩	⟨walizi wayabuli**ki**⟩	⟨baminazi ğana za**ki**⟩	⟨kuwataʔa wakiwa**ki**⟩

In turn, rhyme is not only an audible concept, but is also tied to script. The end rhyme of every line, the sameness of consonant and vowel sign, is also a visible landmark, which becomes particularly evident if one throws a glance at a manuscript page as a whole (see above).

The visual aspect of rhyme has been pointed to by a number of scholars. Steere (1870: xii) found that the Swahili rhyme "is to the eye more than to the ear as all the final syllables being unaccented, the prominent sounds often destroy the feeling of the rime". Similarly, Alice Werner (1920: 26) talks of an "eye rhyme". In his analysis of *qaṣīda* poetry, Abdulaziz (1996: 416) also highlights the importance of the script: "In both Arabic and Swahili, it is the rhyming letter [*sic*] which is crucial". Script enhances the sameness of syllables.

On the other hand, however, I would not subscribe to Greenberg's notion that Swahili rhyme is exclusively based on the sameness of letters: "Thus ba and mba rhyme, likewise me and mi, to and tu etc." (Greenberg 1947: 28). In

my experience, letters which look alike, but represent different phonemes are not considered to rhyme—at least not in the main poetic genres, the *utendi* and the *shairi* (for *shairi* poetry, see Abdulaziz 1979). For instance, we often find the alveolar and dental plosives being represented by the same letter (*ta*), but they are not accepted as rhymes by Swahili speakers. Hence, as a compromise, one can conclude with Harries (1950: 57): "The truth is more likely to be that Swahili rime in the *tendi* is both to the eye and to the ear".

2.4. *Long-Line Measure and Bipartition*

From an emic perspective, script and prosody also parallel each other in the arrangement of lines. Nowadays, in Roman script, the stanza is commonly depicted as a quatrain, being arranged as a four-line block—a decision of layout that was taken by the Swahili committee, the body of standardization (Allen 1967: 178, 179). Obviously modelling the layout after the Western idea of a stanza consisting of lines marked by an end rhyme, this formal decision was also born out of the pragmatic problems posed by the typography of the Roman script, which needed more space than Arabic script (cf. Allen 1967: 178).

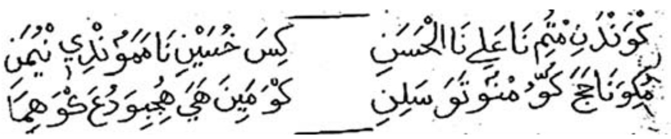
Much to their surprise, the decision-takers were confronted with resistance against the new typographic decision, coming from Swahili poets and intellectuals. First of all, Swahili poets dismissed the way of representation for symbolic reasons, protesting against another form of Western domination and fighting against what was felt to be another coerced alienation from their heritage: the common representation of a stanza in one manuscript line evokes the genre's roots in Arabic long-measure traditions (cf. Hichens 1962–1963).

Furthermore, Swahili poets and scholars also rejected Allen's notion that "layout has nothing to do with prosody" (Allen 1967: 178), underlining the fact that the arrangement was not random but linked to its very prosodic conception. For Western scholars working on standardization, the end rhyme divided the stanza into four equivalent units, which could be arranged as a quatrain. From a Swahili perspective, end rhyme is not the (only) decisive criterion of arrangement: rhyme does not render all four lines equivalent, putting them on the same hierarchical level of line organization. The *ubeiti* falls into two line pairs, a prosodic unit which is not particularly marked by rhyme but rather constituted through language structure: there is commonly a major syntactic-functional boundary between the two line pairs. The major argumentative break between the two line pairs can

be seen in the following example below, where there is a clear-cut break between the enumeration of the dearest members of the Prophet's family and the conditional clause following in the second line pair. It also reflects another principle of rhythmization that has hitherto been overlooked: the parallelization of syntactic-prosodic units. A stanza can also be described as consisting of two parallel line pairs. Basically, the *utendi* stanza can be characterized not only by syllable count and rhyme but also through the successive parallelization of syntactic-prosodic units: a foot parallels a foot, a line parallels a line, a line pair parallels a line pair.[21]

There is also an alternative form of arrangement of the stanza, where line pairs are placed above each other. This echoes this basic bipartition of the stanza, which is not adequately represented in Roman typography.[22] The following example is a stanza taken from the *Kishamia*, a poem in *ukawafi* metre, another long measure metre with longer lines that is closely related to that of the *utendi*.[23]

Kwand̪a ni mtume na Ali na al-Hasani	First of all there is the Prophet, ʿAlī and Ḥasan,
Kisa Khuseini na Mamao, ndie nyumani	then Ḥusayn, and their mother comes last
mukiwa na haja k^{h}uu mno, t̪awasalini	If you have a an urgent issue, pray
kwa maina haya hujibiwa d̪ua kwa hima.	to these names, and your prayer will be answered quickly [my translation]



⟨kisa ḫusayni na mamawu n^{0}diy$_{a}$ n^{0}yumani⟩	⟨k^{0}wan^{0}da ni m^{0}tumi naʾ ʿaliy$_{1}$ naʾ ʾl-ḥasani⟩

[21] For more details of the parallelization of syntactic-prosodic units as a prevalent form of rhythmization in the *utendi*, see Vierke (2011).

[22] This arrangement also enhances links to Arabic long-measure traditions, as Hinawy points out: "In the original Swahili/Arabic script the verses appear as two hemistich couplets in the same way as the qasida is written, but in Roman script they are written as four line stanzas" (cited after Hichens 1962–1963: 123).

[23] The stanza given is stanza five from MS 380739a, SOAS, University of London, composed by Mwenye Mansab. For a critical edition of the *Kishamia*, see Dammann (1940: 276 ff.).

⟨k^{0}wa mayina haya huğibiwa du'a k^{0}wa hima'⟩ ⟨mukiwa na' ḥağa kuwwu m^{0}nuw tawasalini⟩

2.5. *Word Boundaries, Line Boundaries and Space Syntax*

Parallelism of prosody and script is also echoed by word boundaries, which have hitherto been considered to be another form of idiosyncrasy of each poet-writer. In the following example (stz. 105, which has been treated above), we find the possessive *wake* 'his' in the first line being linked to the previous noun, while in Roman script they would be written as two words. The same goes for the conjunction *pamwe na* 'together with', which is linked to *zijana* 'children', the following noun.



⟨m^{0}ba widu mağuhaʔa⟩	⟨walizi wayabuliki⟩	⟨baminazi ğana zaki⟩	⟨kuwataʔa wakiwaki⟩
'o you dog, companion of the ignorants	the foster parents should hear [my words]	together with his children	to fetch his wives'

However, the poet has good reason to write noun and possessive and noun and conjunction as one word, as, phonotactically speaking, they constitute one word: accentuation in Swahili is phrasal (Möhlig 1995: 47, 48). In fact, historically speaking, the decision to write as two words in Roman script what from an accentual point of view belongs together, stirred quite a controversy (cf. Gerhardt 2005: 7). In a letter to Jan Knappert, the Bantuist Doke (1962: 138), considering the orthography of Swahili in Latin script, strongly expressed his preference for word boundaries that are typically found in Swahili writings in Arabic script: "Swahili spelling would be put on a sound basis if the formatives were joined to the words to which they belong. These formatives are mainly: Copulative *ni-* (*nimtu*), (*nimwema*); Conjunctive and Agentive *na-* (*nawewe*; *nacho* (so written); *namtu*); Possessive *a-* (*la-*, *ya-*, etc.; e.g. *kwamiguu*; *kwaMuhamadi*); *Katika* is also involved in this. It should be *kati ka-* (e.g. *kati kanyumba*)".

Thus, word boundaries in Arabic script often follow a phrasal segmentation that also provides the basis for rhythmization: phrasal accent defines the smallest rhythmic unit of the foot; two feet account for an eight-syllable

line. The two feet which are of variable syllable length have to compete for the restricted number of eight syllables per line.[24] Every line is subdivided into two feet, and accordingly, leaving the question of unlinked letters out of consideration, there tends to be one phrase boundary corresponding to one 'word boundary' in writing (cf., for instance, line 4 taken from the stanza given above: *kuwataʔa wakiwaki*).

In *tendi* manuscripts, there is no punctuation such as commas or full stops to divide phonotactic-syntactic units. However, caesurae are clearly marked by spaces. A manuscript can be said to translate rhythm, a unit that defines the relation of sound (related to language structure) to time, into a spatial graphic arrangement—Lehmann (2005), who examines the visualization of metre in Phoenician manuscripts, talks of 'space syntax'. Spacing also hints at a hierarchy of prosodic-syntactic cohesion: the more syntactic-prosodic cohesion the less space is to be expected between the units in question. Line-internally, a gap mainly divides the line into two feet (e.g., *kuwataʔa—wakiwaki*). The line, in turn, forms a prosodically and visually speaking cohesive whole vis-à-vis the next line, which is separated from it by a still larger gap (*kuwataʔa wakiwaki/baminazi ǧana zaki*). A line break indicates the boundary either between line pairs or stanzas. In this sense, a manuscript can also be considered as a record of or guideline to performance, the *utendi*'s main form of actualization, as it instructs the reader on how to rhythmicize his speech: equal distance between word groups on paper indicates a temporarily equal pause in reading or performance, where the reciter can take a breath.

3. Conclusion

In this article I have shown that layout and script are far less arbitrary representations of the *utendi*'s prosodic structure than hitherto suggested. In fact, writing and emic ideas of line structure and prosody are strongly intertwined: the line metre corresponds to the consonantal line, the division of the stanza is strongly echoed by arrangement in lines as well as in word boundaries, and the rhyme is highlighted in writing. Like the use of diacritics to introduce further phonetic differentiations into Arabic script, representation of poetic language is not self-evident, but takes a culturally specific form: even though a number of the conventions are derived from Arabic

[24] On accentuating metrics in the *utendi*, cf. Vierke (2010).

writing cultures, their use for Swahili poetry has to be considered as a form of adaptation, as the Swahili language, and more specifically poetic prosody, are markedly different from Arabic.

Furthermore, representation is also generically specific. In the *utumbuizo*, another poetic genre, which also follows a scheme of prosody, the text often merely runs through like a prose text: the neat analogy of written line and prosodic stanza does not apply. One can consider this difference in representation as echoing the respective mediality of the different genres and their balance of oral and the written modes. The *utendi*, though made to be performed in public, is a genre that is strongly linked to writing, while the *utumbuizo* is more inclined towards oral performance.

In the context of the *utumbuizo*, it is the oral mode of performance and its emphasis on memorization which leaves a subsidiary role to the manuscript as *aide-mémoire*. The manuscript, rather than presenting an unknown text, provides a story line and key words for a knowing reader-performer who merely needs to be reminded. An exact rendering of prosodic units is not even deemed to be necessary, nor are other structuring or contextualizing means. On the contrary, the *utendi* manuscript is a text that in its written form exists independently, also due to a number of chiffres, such as paging—the first line of the following page is announced at the bottom of the previous page. The number of the stanzas, the name of the author, sometimes also the date of composition and a title are given in prologue and epilogue, paratexts that define the *utendi*'s coordinates. The text is singled out: it not only exists in numerous moments of performance but in a written form that has its own mode of existence.

Thus, as has been pointed out in numerous studies since Ong's study of the evolution of literacy in Europe (cf. Ong 2002), the comparison of the *utendi* and the *utumbuizo* show again that orality and literacy in a manuscript culture are not a dichotomy, but rather two ends of a spectrum that allows for different degrees of coexistence. Though both the *utumbuizo* and the *utendi* are orally performed and committed to paper, the *utendi* is far more a written text than the *utumbuizo* which is also tied to people's memory. Thus, it is not the technique of writing *per se* which automatically brings about conventions of depiction and arrangement, like the ones described above. These modes of depiction rather have to be considered as specific cultural patterns that echo not only the emic prosodic-poetic understanding of text but also the specific mediality of genres—issues that might be interesting for further comparative research on Arabic script in Africa.

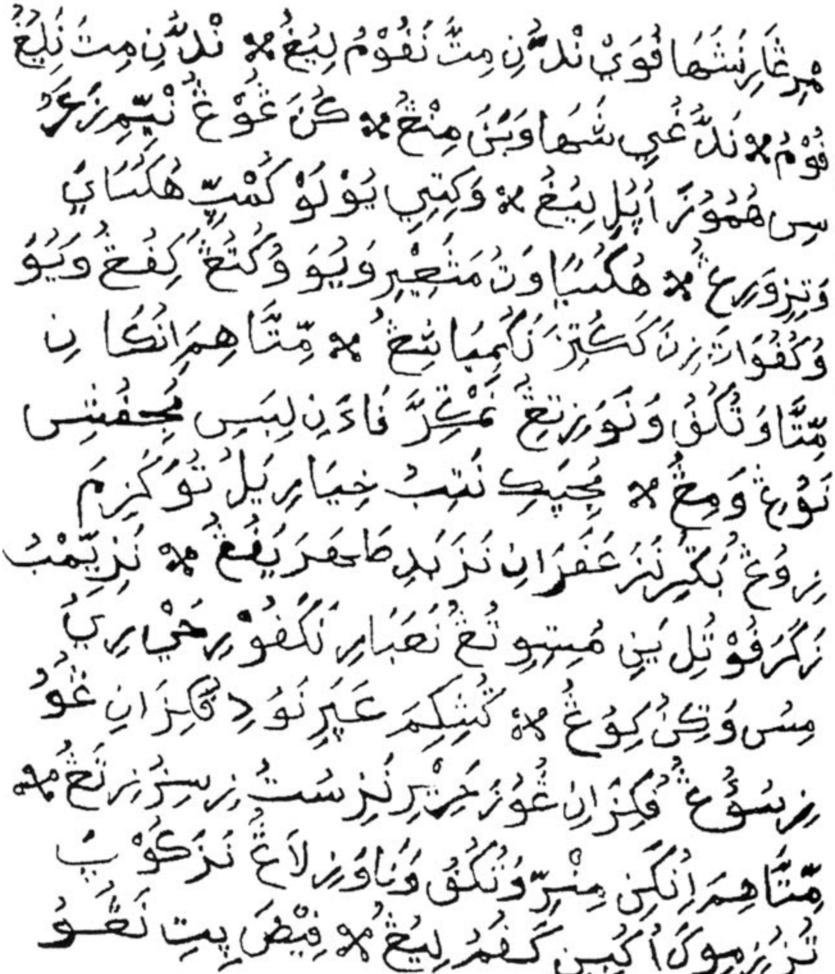


Fig. 4: *Uṯumbuizo wa Liyongo Harusini* (cf. Miehe et al. 2004: 944 ff.), HS or 9898, No. 383, State Library Berlin

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Frontispiece of the Gospel of St. John, Ahmed S. Nabhany Collection, Mombasa
Utendi wa Haudaji, MS 345, 279888-7, SOAS, University of London
Kishamia, MS 380739a, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London
Utumbuizo wa Liyongo Harusini, HS or 9898, No. 383, State Library Berlin

SECTION V

SOUTH AFRICA

REVISITING *AL-QAWL AL-MATĪN*: A SOCIOLINGUISTICALLY ENGINEERED ARABIC-AFRIKAANS TEXT

Muhammed Haron

1. Introduction

The purpose of this essay is to revisit *al-Qawl al-matīn*, a text that drew the attention of two South African scholars (i.e. Weiss and Davids) during the 1980s and that was scrutinized by Adrianus van Selms, a Dutch scholar, in the 1950s. It is not our intention to re-narrate and regurgitate the debate that took place between the two mentioned scholars, nor to address Van Selms' study in any detail, but to summarize their views in the first part of the paper, and, more importantly, to review the sociolinguistic status of this manuscript within the larger set of religious manuscripts that employed 'Arabic script' at the Cape.

Throughout the apartheid era in South Africa (circa 1948–1994), the racist regime only recognized two official languages, namely English and Afrikaans. When the transition was underway in South African between 1990 and 1994, one of the important objectives was to devise a set of policies that would help shed and exorcise its racist image and legacy. One of the many policies that were designed was the adoption of a practical language policy; a policy that was inclusive rather than exclusive. This particular policy shifted from the previous apartheid policy that only recognized two official languages to one that identified eleven official languages (Alexander 1995; Mesthrie 2008). This commendable change clearly demonstrated that the democratically elected government was serious in providing sufficient space for each of the nine African languages that were previously permitted within the apartheid setting but that were marginalized and restricted to specific linguistic groups.

In fact, these restrictions were in line with the 'divide and rule' policy that the apartheid regime passionately designed and implemented in the 1950s. This enforced language policy was eventually challenged, in particular by African students during the mid-1970s in Soweto and surrounding areas. These youth specifically protested against the imposition of the Afrikaans

language into the school curriculum. They regarded Afrikaans as a language that not only represented oppression, but entrenched the apartheid philosophy through educational and other structures, which forced the disenfranchised communities to live their lives in separate geographical areas and to relate to one another in racist terms. Taking into account the painful outcomes of the past, the democratic government exercised its will to develop a new language policy; the aim of this new policy was to essentially rectify the wrongs of the past and give the nine neglected indigenous languages their rightful place alongside English and Afrikaans within the South African linguistic landscape.

While these linguistic developments had a positive impact upon the different South African speech communities, there is a need to retrace our steps into the distant past and reflect upon the language policies that were adopted and implemented at the turn of the 20th century. The purpose of this essay is to share general thoughts regarding how Afrikaans as a language was developed, constructed, and engineered by the growing Cape Muslim community in spite of their disadvantaged socio-political, economic and linguistic conditions (cf. Davids 2011). The Cape Muslim community's contribution towards the Afrikaans language was unknown to the White Afrikaner Christian community, who laid sole claim to its invention and development. The second purpose is to re-examine one significant Arabic-Afrikaans manuscript, namely *al-Qawl al-matīn*, which forms part of a plethora of extant Afrikaans (religious) manuscripts; these were a set of uniquely Arabic scripted manuscripts, which effectively contributed towards the formation of Afrikaans as a language at the Cape. Before we proceed in discussing these issues, we wish to do two things; the first is to put in place a theoretical frame within which to comprehend these distinctive linguistic developments, and the second is to provide a brief sociolinguistic context within which the Afrikaans language developed and the exceptional contribution the Cape Muslim community made during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

2. Language and Community: Conceptual Tools

Since this essay intends to consider how a small community such as the Cape Muslims at the foot of the African continent (unconsciously) participated in contributing towards the construction of a creolized form of the Dutch language, namely Afrikaans, we have to consider how the two concepts 'community' and 'language' relate to each other. While Wardhaugh

(2002: 1) states concisely that language is what members of a particular community speak, Montgomery (2008: 2) makes the point that language lurks behind speech for after all "[s]peech is merely its manifestation".

Even though language is an abstract system, it is not static but dynamic (Milroy & Milroy 1997): language is 'a meaningful activity', consisting of patterns, conventions, and rules. According to Montgomery (2008: 210), language is not only a system codified in grammar texts and dictionaries, but also an integral part of social life wherein members of the community or more specifically speech communities 'make and remake' it in their daily encounters. Hall (2002: 16) explains this slightly differently when she observes that from a socio-cultural perspective language may be viewed as both an individual tool and a socio-cultural resource, since members of a community use it to participate in social activities and through its employment these members create spaces for themselves. In the process of using the language, these members, *inter alia*, shape their (ethnic/religious/racial) identities, reflect their specific socio-cultural understandings, and express their particular political/ideological positions.

Hall (2002: 32) highlights the fact that when members of a community employ a language, they do so as individuals with shared social histories. Hence, we may describe language as "a communally shared good" (May 2001: 131). As members of a community, Hall continues, the community's collective histories are defined by each one's membership in a range of social groups, such as a social class, a religious tradition, and/or an ethnic group; these categories along with ingredients such as beliefs and values construct the community's social identity. Hall (2002: 53) quotes Elinor Ochs (1996), who notes that "social identity encompasses participant roles, positions, relationships, reputations, and other dimensions of social personae, which are conventionally linked to epistemic and affective stances". Yet, she stresses that the individual member's social identity is largely shaped and constructed by the groups or communities to which he/she belongs.

The term 'community' is regarded as an imprecise and ubiquitous term by Rabinowitz (2001: 2387–2388) and by Jacobs (2001: 2383) as "open to wide interpretation". Both apply Tönnies' sociological model to explain the term more clearly. Tönnies distinguishes between two types of communities, namely 'Gemeinschaft' and 'Gesellschaft'; the former refers to a community that expresses feeling, while the latter refers to associations that make up the community. Community is, according to Tönnies' interpretation, the very foundation upon which society is based or created. Rabinowitz (2001: 2387) states that community is "… usually associated with an array of positive connotations such as solidarity, familiarity, unity of purpose, interest and

identity". Social scientists have generally accepted the idea that it may be defined as a 'type of collectivity or social unit' or a 'type of social relations or sentiments'. By collectivity is meant that the group shares a defined physical space or geographical area, and that it shares common traits or has a sense of belonging. The group maintains social ties and their interaction with one another shapes them into a distinct social entity, such as an ethnic or linguistic community.

Since our concern here is to examine an ethno-religious community (i.e., the Cape Muslim community) and their active participation in the construction of their (shared) language, namely Afrikaans, let us briefly comment on what is understood by a 'speech community', a phrase that was introduced earlier in this section but left unexplained until now. Montgomery (2008: 201) records four characteristics of a 'speech community'. Despite the difficulties associated with the phrase, it refers to a community who shares (i) a common language; (ii) common ways of using a language; (iii) common reactions and attitudes towards a language; and (iv) common social bonds. Each of these characteristics apply to the Cape Muslims: they are a community of people connected to one another through a common religious bond; they react and respond to the language that they use in more or less similar fashion; they exploit the language for a common purpose (i.e., to interact with their colonial masters who spoke Dutch and English); and they speak to one another using creolized Dutch, which subsequently transformed itself into the Afrikaans language. What this concretely demonstrates is that language essentially does not exist independent of a community (Montgomery 2008: 202), which also underscores the point made by Edwards (2009: 100–103), who refers to William Safran's (2008) statement that language and religion are significant identity markers of ethno-national communities.

As a speech community, the Cape Muslims utilized this creolized Dutch as their language of communication in both public and private space. In their private space their religious leaders, however, realized the value of adopting it for religious purposes. They initiated a process of socio-linguistic engineering—to use Achmat Davids' (1990b, 2011) term—which, on the one hand, made use of the flexible and pliable Arabic script and, on the other, contributed towards the development of Afrikaans at the Cape. As a consequence of this linguistic development, the Cape Muslims' religious leaders contributed towards the development of this language by transforming it, to some extent, into what we may describe as 'a religious language', a language that helped to disseminate the basic beliefs and practices of Islam among the Cape Muslims' adults, who were generally familiar with the Arabic script but unfamiliar with the Roman script. For this growing Muslim community

at the Cape, 'Afrikaans' also came to serve as a significant boundary-marker (i.e. a religious identity marker). It caused the Cape Muslims to be distinct from their Dutch-speaking colonial masters, who were leading members of the Dutch Reformed Church, and to be different from other members of the slave community who belonged to Christianity and other religious traditions.

3. Sociolinguistic Developments among Early Cape Communities

During the 19th and early 20th centuries, Cape society was quite conspicuously a heterogeneous society, generally divided into three distinct communities, namely European colonists, the Khoekhoe (tribal) communities, and the Afro-Asian slave communities. In this socio-political setting since the 1650s the Dutch colonists represented by the Dutch East India Company (VOC) wielded all the necessary socio-political and economic power, as illustrated by Dooling (2007). These colonists incorporated the Khoekhoe communities and the slave communities into the wage labour system. Both were, of course, dominated by and subjected to colonial rule and remained disenfranchised with basically no social power.

The colonists, who came from two different geographical locations in Europe, brought with them their histories and their respective languages. The Dutch, who preceded the British by more than a century, spoke and used Dutch as the official language. Roberge (1995: 78) describes the period as one in which, "[t]he slaves and Khoekhoe, sharing no common languages, used Dutch as their primary medium of communication augmented by adlexification from Creole Portuguese". He further states that, "[b]y the eighteenth century, stabilisation of Khoekhoe and slave jargon into a Cape Dutch pigeon occurred in the colonial laboring class, albeit with regional and ethnic variation". Part of his argument derives from the German traveler O.F. Mentzel, who had first-hand knowledge of sociolinguistic developments at the Cape between 1737 and 1745.

When the British entered southern African soil in the late 18th century and early 19th century, they gradually imposed English as the language of communication. This resulted in both Dutch and English, on the one hand, being employed and, on the other, vying for influence among the subjected indigenous, slave and freed Black communities. The language policy was thus implemented at the expense of the languages spoken by the indigenous and slave communities (cf. Djite 2008: 21). Despite being burdened by

acquiring and learning the respective colonial languages, these communities continued to speak their 'native' or mother-tongue languages to those who came from the same ethno-linguistic groups. During these times, it was therefore not uncommon to find groups speaking Malay, a language belonging to the Malayo-Polynesian family of languages in Southeast Asia, with those who came from the same ethno-linguistic group or those familiar with Malayo-Portuguese. Bradlow and Cairns & Cairns (1978: 83) argue that since the numbers of slaves who came from Southeast Asia was less than those who came from South Asia (i.e. from Bengal), the term 'Malay' was used because of the prominence of Malay as the lingua franca in and beyond the Southeast Asian straits; this language even reached as far as Madagascar (cf. Milner 2008). One may surmise that since Malay was influential and widespread, the colonists as well as many seafaring communities such as the Javanese (Malay archipelago) and the Bengalese (eastern part of India), who were enslaved, were familiar with this commercial language.

Malay was indeed one of the various languages that migrated to the Cape and were spoken there for a limited period of time through the late 17th and early 18th centuries. With the passage of time, the languages that were spoken by the indigenous communities and those that were used by the diverse slave communities slowly disappeared and in the process, some of them eventually disappeared. The ultimate death of these languages may be attributed to the fact that as minute minority languages (cf. May 2001) they were unable to survive amidst an environment where the colonial languages competed with one another and where the language of the dominant (slave) speakers (i.e. Malay) remained flexible. Some Malay lexical items were absorbed into the creolized Dutch or what was also known as 'Cape Dutch pidgin', a variety that Roberge (1995: 78) highlights in his assessment of the formation of Afrikaans. Like the other slave languages, Malay eventually lost its resilience through the depletion of its number of speakers, as well as other internal and external factors. Although it physically disappeared from the Cape sociolinguistic map, it left behind some linguistic traces. As stated earlier, words and phrases were slowly taken up and became part of the lexicon of the emerging Afrikaans language (i.e. the Cape Dutch pidgin that Roberge referred to in his study). Since this language emerged and developed out of the socio-political and cultural conditions prevalent throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, it was frowned upon by the elite classes within the colonist community; they referred to it by a variety of epithets, such as *Hottentots taal* 'Hottentot language', *kombuis taal* 'kitchen language', *Cape Dutch patois* 'Cape Dutch dialect', and 'corrupt Dutch' (cf. Davids 1990a: 38–39). It is indeed ironical, as Davids asserts, to find that the

Afrikaners became so passionate about the formation of this language that they seem to have laid sole claim to it, even to such an extent that it developed into the language of the oppressor. As a result, the respective contributions of the Khoekhoe and the Cape Muslim communities were deliberately obliterated (cf. Davids 1990a; Roberge 1995).

At this point it should be stated that even though the offspring of the colonists, namely the White Afrikaner community, laid claim to the Afrikaans language, their intellectuals were not totally ignorant of the input made by the Cape Muslim contributions. In any case, Afrikaans, which has also been described as the step-child of Dutch, was only given recognition within the Union of South Africa (established in 1910) by 1925. Despite this late recognition, the White Afrikaners persisted in circulating their interpretation of the linguistic narrative; they argued along the lines that Afrikaans gave them a sense of identity within the South African context, an identity that was due to the input from their forebears, who constructed and developed it over a long period, particularly in the 19th century when they set up, among others, the Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners (established in 1857) and translated the Bible into Afrikaans (cf. Davids 1990a: 40–41). Since much has been written about their contribution and despite the questions that have been raised regarding their sole contribution as regards the formation of Afrikaans, let us revisit the Cape Muslims' involvement in the formation of Afrikaans in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

4. The Cape Muslim Community and the Afrikaans Language

The Cape communities consisted of diverse ethnic, religious, and racial groups, who hailed from different geographical areas and who spoke a variety of languages. During the 18th and 19th centuries, the Cape was a multilingual community. Apart from the two colonial languages, namely English and Dutch, there were groups who spoke and conversed in different African and Asian languages; for example, some spoke Swahili, others conversed in Indian dialects, and a few addressed each other in languages such as Buginese and Javanese that were spoken in the Malay Archipelago. Since the colonialists (i.e. Dutch and British) were the dominant powers, their respective administrations had no interest in preserving any of the indigenous languages and were not in favour of preserving any of the languages spoken by slaves or the freed Blacks. In their eyes, these languages were insignificant in the (multilingual) Cape environment. As a consequence of this negative attitude, these minority languages were marginalized and quite a few that

had accompanied the slaves from their places of origin, eventually disappeared and died. This phenomenon could have been reversed if the colonial powers had realized the positive aspects associated with maintaining the prevalent minority languages.

Be that as it may, when we look closely at the early Cape Muslims the historical sources such as Bradlow & Cairns (1978) demonstrate that their ancestors hailed from three regions, Southeast Asia (Jawa, Sulawesi, etc.), South Asia (Bengal) and Africa (east and west). However, since those who came from Southeast Asia seem to have been more influential at the Cape, the Cape Muslims came to be referred to in subsequent years as the Cape 'Malay' community. This term was disputed by the emerging generation of Muslim youth in the 1970s and 1980s: they felt that it was a politically constructed concept that was untenable and one that had to be abandoned. As a result of the socio-political and religious developments during the contemporary era, present-day Muslims generally prefer using the religious term, rather than the ethnic or politically charged one.

Apart from this, since 'Malay' as a communal language appears to have been a dominant language among the slave and free Black communities, it was adopted by many. Despite its adoption and relatively wide-spread use at the Cape during the late 18th and 19th centuries, the language could not sustain itself because it was marginalized by the dominance and impact of the colonial languages, Dutch and (later) English. Since Dutch was historically embedded in Cape society since the mid-17th century, it was only natural to find many of the members of the slave community and free Black community being quite familiar with (varieties of) Dutch and to a lesser extent with English.

When we scrutinize the 19th century newspapers such as *The South African Commercial Advertiser*, we note that there was a handful of noteworthy Cape Muslims who wrote for the 'letters to the editor' column to express their views on issues. One of these was Abdul Burns (cf. Davids 1980: 63–84), who did so on a regular basis quite eloquently. What this indicates is that some of the Cape Muslims were well schooled and had a good command of both colonial languages. It seems that although there were a few educated Cape Muslims who were schooled in conversing and writing the two colonial languages, there were many who were fully conversant with either of the two. Yet, because they were unable to read or write these 'official' languages in Roman script, they were widely regarded by their colonial masters to be 'illiterate'. Many of them were, however, far from illiterate since they could read Arabic script with ease. This is borne out by the extant evidence, which shows that they kept records of their bills written in Ara-

bic script. The following questions may be posed: How did they come to remain a fairly vibrant and literate community without losing their religious and ethnic identity? Why did they employ Arabic instead of Roman script? What caused their religious leaders to utilize Arabic script to produce many religious texts? At what point in their early history did they employ this method of writing Afrikaans in Arabic script? Were there outside factors that induced them to pursue this path of spreading religious teachings or were their internal factors that gave rise to this development?

Although no satisfactory answers will be provided in this essay for all of these and other related questions, it should be remembered that despite the adverse conditions that the Cape Muslims faced, they managed to survive the colonial rule and maintain their ethno-religious identity. From among the few answers that we are able to proffer is that since the Muslims were brought to the Cape as slaves and political prisoners from Southeast Asia and South Asia, they were knowledgeable about the Arabic script's use in their respective regions and saw it as a viable script that could be utilized for religious reasons at the Cape. It is as a result of this linguistic exposure and experience that they transferred the script to the Cape and in the end made an indelible mark in the field of sociolinguistics in general and to the Afrikaans language in particular. In fact, when the Cape Muslim religious leadership made their sociolinguistic input, this unique contribution was not known to the Afrikaner Christian community, which played a dominant role as *the* favoured colonial community, while being on the whole ill-informed about the sociolinguistic developments that were taking place in their midst among other ethnic/racial groups at the Cape.

5. The Text of *al-Qawl al-matin*

5.1. *The Cape Muslim Manuscript Tradition: Switching from the Arabic to the Latin Script*

Reference was made above to the fact that the early Muslims, who were brought from the Malay Archipelago, were well acquainted with the Arabic script, which was popularly referred to as the Jawi script, and which their communities readily employed to write their local/regional languages. Since they were fully aware of how this malleable script had empowered their co-religionists elsewhere, the Cape Muslims' religious leaders who were trained in this writing tradition consciously decided to continue using it during the period when they were incarcerated at the Cape. Subsequently, their practices were emulated by and influenced talented religious leaders of the

subsequent generations. Some of these (emerging) religious leaders, with the exception of Abu Bakr Effendi and a handful of others, grew up within a heterogeneous Cape society, in which the Dutch language, alongside English, was the dominant and the official language. They innovatively employed the Arabic script for the Afrikaans language at the Cape.

According to Davids (1990a, 1990b, 1991, 2011), this is evidenced by the extant late 18th century and early 19th century *koples* 'homework' books, which were prepared by the uninitiated (religious) learners. When they took notes during lessons in creolized Dutch from their *khaliphas* 'religious teachers', they used the Arabic script with which they were more familiar, rather than the Latin script that remained 'foreign' to them. This was a practice that continued into the mid-20th century, after which it gradually disappeared (cf. van Selms 1953: 73). By the end of the 19th century, however, Latin/Roman script had slowly made headway as an alternative script, and by the latter part of the 20th century it had replaced the Arabic script as the best alternative in the changed circumstances. Since Adrianus van Selms, Achmat Davids, Hans Kähler, and a few others have already narrated in some detail the evolution of the more than 75 Arabic-Afrikaans manuscripts at the Cape, we shall confine ourselves to one of the extant manuscripts to demonstrate to what degree early Muslim leaders sociolinguistically engineered the Arabic script and how this effectively added to the development of the Afrikaans language.

At the Cape, the Dutch scholar Adrianus van Selms was supported by Achmat Davids (1980: 43) in identifying *al-Qawl al-matīn* 'The compact statement/The trustworthy word' as the first written text in the Arabic-Afrikaans genre. According to van Selms, this lithographically produced manuscript appeared about three decades before Abu Bakr Effendi's famous Hanafite treatise, *Bayān ad-dīn* 'The explanation of religion'. For the purposes of this study, we revisit this significant text and place it within the broader context to obtain an understanding of its contents and assess to what extent it was sociolinguistically engineered at a crucial period in Cape Muslim history in particular, and the history of the Afrikaans language in general.

5.2. Al-Qawl al-matīn*: A Unique Cape Text*

After Adrianus van Selms undertook a study of *Kitāb at-tawḥīd* 'The book regarding God's unity' by Sheikh Ahmad Behardien in 1951, he was convinced through his 1953 research that *al-Qawl al-matīn*, published in 1856, was the first Arabic-Afrikaans lithographic manuscript. In his lengthy article

"Die Oudste Boek in Afrikaans: Isjmoeni se *'Betroubare Woord'* ", van Selms persuasively argued that *Gablomatien*, as he inaccurately transliterated the title into Roman script, was the same text that was mentioned in one of the newspaper articles of the mid 1850s. He not only brought evidence to prove this, but also argued that the 1910 print was a copy of the earlier manuscript. Despite van Selms' somewhat definitive conclusions, no real debate was sparked by it, as may be observed from the catalogue of articles that appeared in the *Hertzog Annale van die Suid Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns*, the premier Afrikaner journal in the mid 1950s, as well as the articles that appeared elsewhere on the subject in the decades that followed (circa 1960–1970). When Weiss returned in the mid 1980s to van Selms' 1953 publication and critically perused the available texts, he was somewhat unsettled by the issue of identification of this particular lithographic manuscript. Weiss questioned the validity of van Selms' thesis and further investigated it. The conclusions that Weiss reached overturned van Selms' arguments and this radically changed the prevalent views about the history of *al-Qawl al-matīn*.

What Weiss proved was that the manuscript that van Selms had referred to and that he assumed to have been the oldest Arabic-Afrikaans manuscript, was in fact an Arabic text, prepared many decades ago, and only translated into Afrikaans (in Arabic script) in 1910. Davids (1987) had initially accepted van Selms' position as regards the status of the manuscript. When challenged by Weiss, he excitedly and expectantly went back to it and afterwards revised his position by positively concurring with Weiss in 1989. Davids acknowledged that the 'problem of identification' was at the heart of the debate and that it was not possible to come up with any counterclaims. Since this was settled by these researchers, it seems to have given credence to the argument that Abu Bakr Effendi's *Bayān ad-dīn* was indeed the first Arabic-Afrikaans lithographic text that was published in Istanbul. Let us now assess the contents of *al-Qawl al-matīn* to gain a better insight into its contents, with some of the following questions in mind: Why was this text chosen at that point in time? Who was the target audience? What did the translator wish to prove and highlight in presenting and circulating this translation? When exactly was the Arabic text penned and how did it reach the Cape? Although it might not be possible to answer them all in a satisfactory manner, an attempt shall be made to do so.

5.2.1. *The Contents of the Manuscript*

Al-Qawl al-matīn may be described as a beautifully presented lithographic manuscript that consists of 25 folios. Van Selms (1953: 71) correctly pointed out that the 26th folio was written in a different hand and must be viewed as an additional folio not associated with the copyist. This manuscript falls within the category of Classical manuscripts that follow the question (*su'āl*) and answer (*jawāb*) method, which was successful and popular since before the Medieval period when many such manuscripts were circulated in order to educate the emerging and growing Muslim community about the fundamentals of Islam.

Notwithstanding this, Imam Abu Bakr ibn ʿAbdullah ibn ʿAbdurauf, who was the Cape Muslim copyist/translator, employed the popular *nasḫī* style of writing when he reproduced the Arabic text; compared to some of the others (e.g. the *maġribī*), this script could be easily emulated by those who had an interest in becoming acquainted with the variants of the Arabic script. In the process of copying the Arabic text, the copyist provided his Arabic-Afrikaans translation and inserted 19 lines per folio with the exception of the final folio. The copyist/translator pursued the 'sentence-by-sentence' format instead of the 'face-to-face' or 'page-by-page' translation format.

When considering the overall production and presentation of this manuscript, we get the impression that ʾAḥmad ibn ʿAbd al-Karīm ibn Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Karīm al-ʾIšmūnī, the author of the Arabic text who according to van Selms' investigation hailed from Egypt, had an adult audience in mind when he prepared this theological text. The simple 'step-by-step' structure of the text demonstrates that when the author designed it, he kept in mind the target audience who was expected, on the one hand, to try to comprehend its contents and, on the other, to attempt to memorize them. Now the 'step-by-step' approach, which was employed, was an apt method that was adopted by the author as well as many others. We deduce that the reason for this was that it assisted in presenting his theological ideas in a reasonably logical and simple manner; in other words, he begins the manuscript by starting with the very basic theological ideas, such as defining and explaining what 'faith' is, and then proceeding to the more complex religious thought regarding God's attributes and the notion of creation.

According to van Selms (1953: 70–72), this manuscript contains the basic teaching of the religion and it consists of three broad sections. The first part refers to the fundamental religious beliefs underpinning and explaining Islam; the second section expands upon these aspects and provides many

more details complementing and expounding the dimensions of beliefs, such as the concept of 'sincerity'; and the third section deals with practical dimensions of the rituals that the individual is expected to follow and pursue. As mentioned earlier, this manuscript was based upon the classical 'question and answer' format; what this method implies is that writers adopt an unassuming, modest approach by ascribing the text's actual writing to the person or persons who had made a special request to write the manuscript, rather than to themselves.

5.2.2. *Sociolinguistic Orthographical Engineering: Some Samples*

For the purposes of this essay, we shall restrict our discussion to a few samples from the manuscript. The basic reason for this is that there are innumerable examples and it is beyond the scope of this essay to deal with each and every aspect. Since we wish to demonstrate the copyist's innovative sociolinguistic orthographical engineering style and contribution, we begin by commenting on orthography before highlighting and expanding upon other significant examples. Davids (1990a: 8; 2011: 25) defined this engineering as "a process by which a foreign alphabet and its vowel system is restructured and adapted to produce orthographical representations of the sounds of the vowels, diphthongs and letters in an indigenous tongue written with that foreign alphabet".

5.2.2.1. *Orthographical Options*

Since the copyist came from within the Cape Muslim community, who were all speakers of creolized Dutch/Afrikaans, he conformed wherever possible to Dutch orthography, in which Afrikaans was and is linguistically embedded. After a quick scan of the manuscript, one may observe that on some occasions the copyist strayed by using English orthography. The one specific example that comes to mind is the word دِيفْرِنْتْ ⟨dyf^{0}rn^{0}t^0⟩ 'different', which appears on folio 16 [line 10] and folio 21 [line 3], respectively. When comparing the word as it appears on the two folios, we further note that the copyist spelt or transliterated them slightly differently. The earlier spelling appears on folio 21, but on folio 16 it appears as دِفَرَنْتْ ⟨difaran^{0}t^0⟩. The letter ى after the letter د does not appear in the spelling on folio 16, and it is also observed that the vowel marks changed accordingly. Another interesting feature of this particular word is that while the Arabic word خِلَاف *ḫilāf* is translated as 'difference' on the mentioned folios, it is for some reason retained as خِلَاف on folio 17 line 8. It is difficult to find the reason why the copyist chose to retain the Arabic word and ignore the word that was used on the previous folio.

Perhaps it is instructive to reproduce the sentence, so that one has a clearer idea of what we are referring to. It reads as follows دَنْ سَيَخْ دَادْ اَنْ اِس خِلاف بِسْتِرَيْرَى ⟨dan sayẖ daʾd ʾan ʾis ẖilʾf bis°tirayray$_1$⟩ *dan se dat daar is n verskil* (*of*) *n strayery* 'then say that with regards to that [issue] there is a difference [of opinion]'. Immediately after the word خِلاف the copyist inserts the word بِسْتِرَيْرَى which means *bestryery* in Cape Muslim Afrikaans and in Standard Afrikaans *stryery*, as noted by van Selms (1953: 80, 96, note 305). Given that this particular word was absent from the Arabic sentence, the copyist considered it appropriate to add it in order to convey the approximate meaning of the Arabic sentence in Cape Muslim Afrikaans.

5.2.2.2. *The Transcription/Translation Challenges*

In the opening lines of the first folio, the author begins, like all other theological texts, with the *basmala*, i.e. the phrase 'In the name of God, the Merciful, the Beneficent'. Soon thereafter, the manuscript continues with the *taṣliya*, i.e., the other important phrase 'and may Allah shower His blessings and peace upon our master Muḥammad and upon his family and friends'. In each case, the copyist followed this up with his transliteration/translation of these phrases into Afrikaans in Arabic script (see Figure 1).

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
[مُت دِيْ جَمَرْ لَكى خَنَادَخى سَيْنْ نَام]
وصلى على سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه وسلّم
أَنْ سيِيْخَنْ فَنْ اُوْبْ اُوْنْسْ سَيْنْ هِيرْ محمد اَن اُوْبْ سَيْنْ فَمِلْجِسْ اَن سَيْنْ فِرَنْدَى اِن خُلُوْكْ اُوْكْ سُو فَنْ.

Fig. 1: *al-Qawl al-matīn, basmala* and *taṣliya*: Lines 1–4

Following upon the *basmala* and *taṣliya*, the Egyptian author introduces himself 'then the humble servant of God standing on his two feet [though] weak and unqualified, [and who] desires God's pardon, ʾAḥmad ibn ʿAbd al-Karīm ibn Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Karīm al-ʾIšmūnī, may God pardon them all, said …'.

أمّا بعد: [دَن أَخْتِرْ دَتْ]

فيقول العبد الفقير والقائم على قدمىّ العجز والتقصير الرّاجي عفو ربّه القدير أحمد عبد الكريم بن محمد الآشمونى
عفى عنهم بفضله العميم [دِسَلاَفْ دِى آرمى قَتْ ستَان اُوْبْ سَيْنْ تُوِى سَوَاكْ أَحْتَرْ لُوسْتَخى فُوتى دِىْ
فَرْلَنْكِرْ سَيْنْ مَخْتَخى سَيْنْ بَدَنْ أَحمد عبد الكريم سَيْنْ سُوْنْ اِن سُوْنْ فَنْ محمد عبد الكريم اشمونى سين
سون سَلْ فَرْ هَلى بَلُونْ خِيفْ مْثْ سَيْنْ خُرُوتى خُدِيخَيْثْ]

Fig. 2: *al-Qawl al-matīn* lines 4–7

The author ends the first folio by giving the reasons for the request, the manuscript's compilation, and its title. In the final two lines, he poses the first of 56 questions: What is religion? He conveniently answered in his simple style this as well as all the questions that follow.

هذه فوائد مهمّة [دَثْ آَسْ خُرُوتى فُوْرْدِيَلْ دَنْكى]
تحتاج الى حرف الهمّة [فَثْ نُوْدَخْ اِسْ أُوْمْ آلى مُويلِكْخَيْثْ فُوَرْ تَمَاكْ]
قد سئلت عنها فجمّعته [اِيكْ فَس خَفَرَاخْ فَنْدَثْ تُو هَثْ اِيكْ بِى مَكَنْدَرْ حَمَاكْ دَثْ]
وسمّيتها القول المتين [آَنْ اِيكْ هِثْ سَيْنْ نَام خَخِيفْ قَوْلَ الْمَتِينْ دِثْ مِينْ سَوَارِى فُوَرْدَي]
فى بيان أمور الدّين [أُوْمْ دَيْدَلَكْ تَمَاكْ دِى خُلُوفْ سَيْنْ بيسَخَيْثْ]
وهى فان قيل لك [اِنْدَثْ اِسْ آَسْ خَسِيخْ فُوَرْثْ فَرْجَوْ]
ما الدين [فَثْ اِسْدِى خُلُوفْ]

Fig. 3: *al-Qawl al-matīn* lines 8–14

As observed from the three related quotations above, the contents follow this pattern of presentation throughout; it is a pedagogical approach that is not just didactic, but also educational and instructive. Presumably, both the author and the copyist/translator regarded this as an appropriate method when it was prepared and later circulated. In the case of the Cape Muslims, the manuscript suited their theological needs. Aside from these general remarks, let us look at specific issues pertaining to the text; here we wish to select certain words to demonstrate how—and perhaps answer the question 'why'—they were constructed in a particular manner.

5.2.2.3. *Word Construction*

When the copyist embarked on his translation project, he presumably had a fair knowledge of both Arabic and Afrikaans. After careful scrutiny, we concur with van Selms' observation that the copyist's knowledge of Arabic grammar was limited and that he did not stick to the correct phrasing of the sentence that he translated from Arabic into Afrikaans. Let us take one quick example. When he copied the manuscript's title he left out *ʾal* (i.e., the definite article) in the Arabic-Afrikaans; as a result of this, the title appeared in the *ʾiḍāfa* (i.e. genitive construct) form instead of *at-taʿbīr an-naʿtī* (descriptive phrase) form. In this instance, the grammatical rules were sidestepped, since it was written as follows قولَ المَتِينَ *qawl al-matīn*. Despite this and other shortcomings in this manuscript, the copyist succeeded in conveying the gist of the idea and this was important in the circumstances. Nonetheless, let us reflect upon the *basmala* on the first folio (see Table 1).

Table 1: Words from the *basmala*

English	Afrikaans	Arabic script
'in'	*met*	مُتْ
'the'	*die*	دِى
'merciful'	*jammerlike*	جَمَرْلَكِى
'beneficent'	*genadige*	خَنَادَخِى
'his'	*syn*	سَيْنْ
'name'	*naam*	نَامْ

In Table 1 we have given samples from the *basmala* in order to show how the copyist constructed and formulated his words. Earlier we stated that he did not conform to the conventional style, as was expected because of the inconsistencies in the method of transcription. The copyist had the chance to construct the word in a manner that more or less coincided with the exact pronunciation of the word when pronounced and read in Afrikaans. We hasten to add that the Cape Muslims' use of Afrikaans differed slightly from that of other communities who spoke it. As a consequence, a catalogue of words appeared that are pronounced with a slightly different tone and accent. When the copyist translated the *basmala*, he moved away from the convention in that the phrase was translated in such a way that it conformed to Standard Afrikaans grammatical rules, rather than those of the Arabic language. The following points may be noted.

i. The word مُتْ ⟨mut^0⟩ *met* 'in' is pronounced and vocalized differently from the way it was written in Arabic script. The copyist opted to write the consonant م with a *ḍamma*, which is the vowel marker for /u/, rather than Afrikaans /e/. What is also remarkable is that the last consonant, like many other letters/consonants in this manuscript, ends with a *sukūn* as the diacritical mark.
ii. The pronunciation of the next word دِى ⟨diy$_1$⟩ *die* 'the' is fairly straightforward and similar to the sound in Afrikaans; the only exception is that when a person reads it according to the Arabic convention, it will be an elongated instead of a short sound.
iii. While the last two words are written separately on the first folio, the copyist joined them in other parts of the manuscript to form one word; they appear as مُتْدِى (cf. folio 23 line 14) when written together. In this example, the author has innovatively combined two vowel markers, as in innumerable other cases in the manuscript, and inserted them on

top of the letter; in the above example on the letter م, a *ḍamma* and a *kasra* have been inserted (see the next sub-section).

iv. Although the word جَمَرْلَكِي ⟨ğamar^{0}lk$_{a}$y$_{1}$⟩ *jammerlike* 'merciful' does not accurately resemble the sound of the Afrikaans word, a certain compromise was reached by the copyist: even though ى resembles /j/ in Afrikaans, the copyist preferred the use of the consonant ج in Arabic; it could be that when pronouncing this consonant the sound that it conveys is somewhat more accurate. On this point we refer to Stell (2007: 98), who states that this construction "reflects the characteristic of Cape Malay alveopalatal affricative [ʤ] attributed to Malay influence". An additional aspect of this transliterated word was that the copyist invented a sound structure that resembled a similar sound; in the Arabic script the copyist inserted a standing *ʾalif* below the letter ك—a practice that he followed throughout the manuscript, in particular with words for which he was unable to find an exact equivalent in Afrikaans.

v. The same argument applies to the word خَنَادَخِي ⟨ḫanaʾdaḫ$_{a}$y$_{1}$⟩ *genadige* 'beneficent'; the letter خ, like the letter ك in the previous word also has an upright *ʾalif* under it.

vi. The word الله *allāh*, as well as many other key words such as ايمان *ʾīmān* (folio 1 line 19; folio 19 line 6) and احسان *ʾiḥsān* (folio 12 line 12), which appear in other parts of the manuscript, have been retained and not translated into Afrikaans. There are, however, other instances where the copyist creatively Afrikaanized the Arabic word instead of giving the Afrikaans equivalent, as is the case in the following example: كُتُب *kutub* 'books', which he rendered as كِتَابْسْ ⟨kitʾb^{0}s^{0}⟩ *kitabs* (folio 20 line 7).

vii. The word سَيْنْ ⟨say^{0}n^{0}⟩ that does not appear in the Arabic phrase but that was inserted by the copyist to render the Afrikaans phrase meaningful; the word in this case means *syn* 'His'. The two last letters have the *sukūn* inserted on each of them and this is due to the pronunciation principle that is in place and applicable.

viii. The word نَامْ ⟨nʾm^{0}⟩ is exactly the same as the word *naam* 'name'; the letter مْ also adopts a *sukūn* as an end marker.

5.2.2.4. *Combination of Graphemes*

In the preceding section we have seen how the copyist—as well as some of his contemporaries who were occupied with similar tasks—went about translating and transliterating the Arabic texts and how he dealt with some

of the linguistic challenges. Among the list of challenges was his formulation of the Arabic sentence/word in Afrikaans. At this point, one linguistic challenge should be mentioned, with which we wish to conclude this essay. Even though the 'combination of graphemes' was touched upon by Davids (1990b: 12–13) when he analyzed aspects of Abu Bakr Effendi's *Bayān ad-dīn* in this area, we wish to briefly return to it, drawing upon examples from *al-Qawl al-matīn*. Although the 'combination of graphemes' did not accurately capture the pronunciation of the word in Afrikaans, it was generally regarded as a significant strategy, which assisted in the formulation of sounds that were, to some extent, equivalent to Afrikaans words. Let us go back to the text and draw from it a few examples to illustrate what is meant by this strategy.

On folio 2 line 1, the question is raised أَنْ فَت إِسْ إِسْلامْ ⟨'ain fat 'ais^0 'is^{0}l'm^0⟩ *en wat is islam?* 'and what is Islam?'; the word إَنْ ⟨'ain⟩ *en* 'and' has both a *fatḥa* and a *kasra*. This type of structure is not found in Arabic, because no consonant can have two vowel markers at the same time, since these represent two totally different sounds. The copyist considered it quite appropriate to insert both on the letter, so that the reader/student is able to locate the correct sound when pronouncing the word in Cape Muslim Afrikaans. Since there is no equivalent of *e* in Arabic script, the copyist invented this combination as a useful and applicable strategy. In the same sentence the other word with two vowel markers is إَسْ ⟨'ais^0⟩ *is* 'is'.

Another example on the same folio line 6 is the word نُوَتْسَاكَلِكى دَنْكى ⟨nuwatsa'kailiky$_1$ dan^{0}ky$_1$⟩ *noodsaaklike dinge* 'necessary things'. In this word, the first of the two letters ك has both vowel markings *fatḥa* and *kasra*. An intriguing aspect of this example is that instead of using the letter د, which would have been a more appropriate equivalent for the letter *d* in the Afrikaans word *noodsaaklik*, the copyist opted for the letter ت, which for him was probably a fair choice in the circumstances. This could be attributed to the fact that since it appeared in Arabic script, it had to conform to both Arabic and Afrikaans conventions, and as a result, a sociolinguistic compromise was struck to express the nearest correct sound. Many more examples of this type of 'combination of graphemes' as an innovative sound strategy could be selected, but the samples presented here should suffice for now.

6. Conclusion

When we reflect on the copyist/translator's sociolinguistic orthographical engineering feat as demonstrated in the final part of this essay, we

have a clear picture of how he succeeded in utilizing the script within the Cape context. Even though it might be argued that he imitated others such as Abu Bakr Effendi, who had produced similar or related theological manuscripts, it cannot be denied that each manuscript that was produced may be regarded as unique within the Cape linguistic environment since they did not undergo any editorial changes, as far as is known. In the case of *al-Qawl al-matīn* the copyist, in spite of grammatical and other syntactical mistakes that occurred in different parts of the manuscript, managed to construct a transliterated text that not only assisted to educate his contemporaries about the basics of Islam, but provided ample examples of the sociolinguistic orthographical engineering process that was commonly adopted and that influenced others in the years that followed. It played a critical role in the religious identity formation of the Cape Muslims. It is hoped that the present article will stimulate others to revisit this and other, related theological texts to further explore how Cape Muslim religious leadership charted out a path that no linguist or literary historian can afford to ignore or overlook.

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A REMARKABLE DOCUMENT IN ARABIC-AFRIKAANS: THE ELECTION PAMPHLET OF 1884*

Kees Versteegh

1. Introduction

In 1863, a Kurdish scholar named Abu Bakr Effendi (1835–1880) was sent by the Ottoman sultan to the Cape Colony to instruct the local Muslim community in the correct rules of Islamic creed and behaviour. The direct motive for his mission was a request by the British government, but it was also part of the Ottoman policy of gaining recognition for the Sultan as sole representative of the Islamic world (cf. Germain 1999; van Bruinessen 2000). Abu Bakr's Ḥanafī interpretation of Islamic law clashed with the Šāfiʿī tradition of the Cape Muslims (Davids 1980: 51–56), but the Arabic school he established constituted an important contribution to the development of formal instruction in Arabic and Islamic knowledge in the Cape Colony.

For the spreading of his message Abu Bakr used the language that by then had become the common language of the Cape Muslim community, Afrikaans. Muslims had been residents of the Cape, especially of Cape Town, since the second half of the 17th century. The founder members of this community were labourers and political prisoners from various regions in South and Southeast Asia, who had been transported by the Dutch to South Africa. They spoke different languages, but most of them knew and used Malay, which had been in use in Southeast Asia as the language of Islamic instruction. When Malay was written, Arabic script (the so-called Jawi script) was used, adapted to the sound inventory of the language. After the initial period of migration to the Cape Colony, many non-Malay inhabitants of the Cape, especially slaves and freemen, converted to Islam. By the time Abu Bakr arrived, there was a thriving community in Bo-Kaap,

* I wish to thank my former student Iris Hoedemaekers for copying this document and many other materials from the Cape Town archives and bringing them to my attention; Xavier Luffin (Université Libre de Bruxelles) kindly sent me a copy of his translation of Ömer Lütfi's travel account, and Saarah Jappie a copy of her MA thesis.

with five mosques (Davids 1980: 97). Collectively, Muslims in South Africa were often called 'Malays', and in the context of Cape Town, this term became practically synonymous with 'Muslims', although most Muslims regarded it as a derogatory term (Fransch 2009: 67–69; Davids 2011: 18–19).

Muslims were treated as a kind of 'upper non-White class' because of their professional skills and the fact that they were active as traders or craftsmen (Matthee 2008: 71). Under the prevailing franchise system for elections, they could become registered voters because they owned some property. Within the various groups of non-Whites, converting to Islam was a sign of upwards social mobility (Matthee 2008: 72). As a result, Christianity tended to be regarded as the distinguishing characteristic of the White community, while Islam became increasingly associated with the non-White population.

At first, formal teaching of Islam had been forbidden in the Cape, but when this ban was lifted in 1804, Islamic schools were founded in Cape Town. Initially, Malay was retained as language of instruction and remained so for some decades, as is evident from the Malay interlinear translations in Arabic treatises used by the students (Davids 2011: 79–84). The advent of new converts and the resulting linguistic diversity in the community necessitated the use of a new lingua franca as in-group language. For this purpose, the best choice was Afrikaans, the creolized version of Dutch that had become the daily vernacular of the descendants of the Dutch colonists and many indigenous groups alike. At the time Abu Bakr came to Cape Town, Malay itself was still known by parts of the Muslim community, but since it could no longer serve as an in-group means of communication among them, this knowledge gradually died out, and Malay was replaced by Afrikaans, not only as *lingua franca*, but also as the language of instruction, leaving behind just a few traces in the form of loanwords in the variety of Afrikaans spoken by the Cape Muslims. In the non-Muslim communities in the Cape, Afrikaans was used as a spoken language, but for a long time metropolitan Dutch, the language of the original colonial power, was retained as the official written language of the Cape Colony. Written Afrikaans was only used for humorous purposes, for instance when the language of non-Whites was stereotyped. The term 'Afrikaans' became current only when this style of writing was recognized as a genre in its own right; before the 1870s, the current term for this style was 'Kaapsch Hollandsch', i.e. Cape Dutch (Deumert 2004: 48). It was not until 1925 that Afrikaans became one of the official languages of the Cape (Uys 1983).

It was a logical choice for Abu Bakr to use the colloquial language for the instruction in Islam. It was equally logical for him to adopt Arabic script as the medium to represent Afrikaans in writing, since this was the script

most Muslims were familiar with from school, and it was the script that had always been used to write Malay. The literature in Afrikaans written with Arabic script is sometimes called Arabic-Afrikaans or Kitaap-Hollandsch (on the terminology see Davids 2011: 18–19).

The writings in Arabic-Afrikaans by Abu Bakr and others predate the official status of the language and constitutes therefore an important step towards the establishment of a norm for written Afrikaans. Since Muslims had no emotional or ideological ties with metropolitan Dutch, they could use Afrikaans both as a spoken and as a written *lingua franca*. Once they had adopted Afrikaans as their language, it became a unifying factor for all Muslim groups, regardless of their background (Matthee 2008: 72), and in spite of the fact that politically and socially Muslims often identified more with the English than with Afrikaners (Matthee 2008: 79).

Most of the literature written by Cape Muslims belongs to the domain of theology and religion, in accordance with the need of the Muslim community for practical guidance in their religious practice. Even those writings that deal with other than theological topics, usually have some connection with Islam, such as the treatise on Arabic grammar by Ganief Edwards from the late 1950s (see Versteegh 2012). Yet, Arabic-Afrikaans must have been used for informal writing as well. One example is provided by the long account by Abu Bakr Effendi's nephew and travel companion, Ömer Lütfi, who narrated the events during their voyage to the Cape Colony and their reception by the local Muslims (see Luffin 2010). He mentions the use of Afrikaans by the Cape Muslims, and includes in his report a sample letter in Afrikaans, written by himself to his fiancée in South Africa when he had to leave the country to return to Turkey. The letter written by Achmet Effendi after he had been defeated in the 1894 elections (see below), is another example of non-religious use of Arabic-Afrikaans, and so is the letter written by Awaldien the Fez-Maker mentioned by Davids (2011: 95); for a few other instances see Haron (2001). According to Abdulkader Tayob (p.c.) there are still some elderly people around who use it for private correspondence. But such secular applications are the exception. In other *ajami* traditions, too, Arabic script is sometimes used for secular purposes (see, for instance, the examples of *ajami* Swahili in the letter corpus studied by Luffin in this volume), although there always seems to be a certain reluctance to associate Arabic script with worldly matters. In the Tuareg tradition, for instance, Tifinagh is the preferred script for secular affairs, for which Arabic script is felt to be less appropriate (Elghamis 2011).

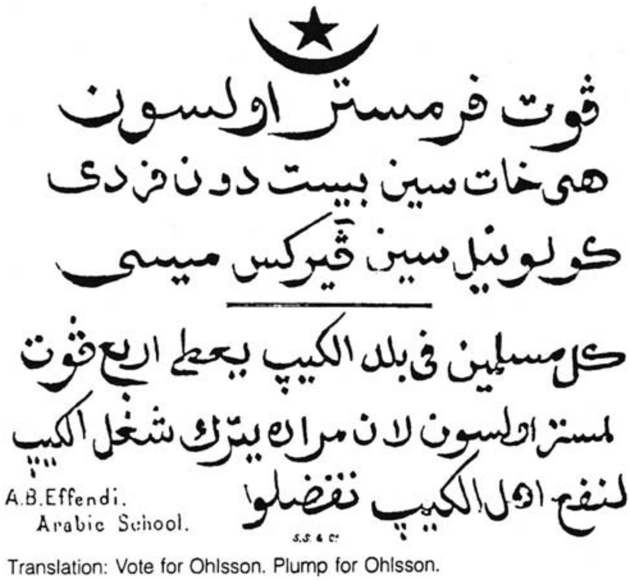


Figure 1: The election pamphlet of 1884

2. The Document

The small document that is the topic of the present article is perhaps the most interesting exception to the predominantly religious use of Arabic-Afrikaans (Hoedemaekers 2006: 75–77; Davids). It is an election pamphlet from the 1884 campaign during the parliamentary elections, supporting the candidacy of Anders Ohlsson, a famous beer brewer from Cape Town. The language of this pamphlet, which is preserved in the Achmat Davids collection, is Afrikaans and Arabic, perhaps also English.

At the top of the document, the Ottoman crescent moon and star appear, which clearly shows an association with the Ottoman empire.

The text consists of six lines, which may be represented graphemically as follows:

⟨f$_2$wt frmstr ʾwlswn
hy$_1$ ḫʾt syn byst dwn frdy$_1$
kwlwnyl syn f$_2$ayrks mysy$_1$
kl mslmyn fy$_1$ bld ʾlkyb$_1$ yʿṭy$_1$ ʾrbʿ f$_2$wt
lmstr ʾwlswn lʾn mrʾdh ytrk šġl ʾlkyb$_1$
lnfʿ ʾhl ʾlkyb$_1$ tfḍlwʾ⟩

This may be interpreted as follows:

vote vir [or: *for*] *Mister Ohlsson*
hy gaat syn best doen vir die colonial syn werksmissie
kull muslimīna fī balad al-Cape yuʿṭī ʾarbaʿ vote
li-Mister Ohlsson li-ʾanna murādahu yatruk šuġl al-Cape
li-nafʿ ʾahl al-Cape tafaḍḍalū

Vote for Mr. Ohlsson
he is going to do his best for the
colonial work mission.
All Muslims in the Cape country should give four votes
to Mr. Ohlsson, because he wants to put [?] the work of the Cape
to the benefit of the people of the Cape, please

At the bottom of the Arabic text a brief remark is printed in Roman script: 'A.B. Effendi, Arabic School', and there is a note, presumably from the archives: 'Translation: Vote for Ohlsson. Plump for Ohlsson'. Since Abu Bakr Effendi had died in 1880, presumably the translation was made by his son, Achmet Ataullah Effendi, who had succeeded him as director of the school. A.B. Effendi could then stand for Achmet Bey Effendi, which is one of the ways the name of Abu Bakr's son is spelled in archival documents (other variants are Achmad Atta Allak, Ahmad Ataas Laak).

Line 2 and 3 are definitely in Afrikaans/Dutch, line 1 in English or in Afrikaans (in that case it should be read 'Vote vir Mister Ohlsson'); lines 4–6 are in Arabic.

3. The Script of the Pamphlet

Because of the brevity of the text, not much can be said about the orthography. It contains only two additional letters to the Arabic script: ڤ ⟨f_2⟩, used for Afrikaans [w] and English ⟨v⟩, and پ ⟨b_1⟩ used for Afrikaans [p]. This is in accordance with the choices made by Abu Bakr Effendi (see also Haron in this volume). In the period before Abu Bakr's arrival in the Cape Colony, the *ajami* orthography of Afrikaans had been influenced by the Jawi script used for the representation of Malay in Arabic script (Stell 2007: 94–95). Abu Bakr's use of Arabic script introduced features from Ottoman Arabic script, including the choice of پ ⟨b_1⟩ for [p] rather than Jawi ڤ ⟨f_2⟩. In addition, he introduced a system for the writing of the Afrikaans vowels.

The notation of the Afrikaans vowels represents a significant innovation in the *ajami* tradition of writing. Davids (1991) analyzes specifically the notation for the Afrikaans vowel /e/, for which Abu Bakr used a combination of the Arabic vowel signs *fatḥa* ◌َ and *kasra* ◌ِ. In the present document, there is only one vowel sign, a *fatḥa* on top of the letter ⟨w⟩ in *werksmissie*

'work mission' followed by a *yāʾ*. This clearly differs from the system devised by Abu Bakr Effendi, but it also differs from the notation that had become current in the period before his innovation. According to Davids (1991: 2), who studied the few extant notebooks (*koplesboeke*) from that period, the usual notation in that period was to indicate *e* with the same signs as *i*, i.e. with *kasra* or *kasra* followed by *yāʾ sukūn* يْ ◌ِ ⟨iy^0⟩.

It is not immediately clear what the language of lines 2–3 of the document is. The language looks like Afrikaans, but is apparently affected by written Dutch norms. Line 2 begins with *hy gaat syn best doen* 'he is going to do his best', where Modern Standard Afrikaans would have *hy gaan sy bes doen*. It could be an adaptation to Dutch written norms (*hij gaat zijn best doen*). The continuation of this sentence has ⟨*fr dy*⟩, which is probably *fir die*, i.e. *vir die* 'for the' (Standard Dutch would be *voor de*). Line 3 is probably to be interpreted as *colonial syn werksmissie* 'the colony's work mission' (Standard Afrikaans would be *koloniaal werksmissie* or *kolonie se werksmissie*, Dutch *werkmissie van de kolonie*; for the possessive *-s-* see Ponelis 1993: 523). The issue of the degree of Dutch interference in Arabic-Afrikaans documents will be dealt with below.

With respect to the Arabic part of this brief text, it is obvious that while it aims to be Classical Arabic, it does not correspond to the rules of standard Arabic grammar. In line 4, the verb *yuʿṭī* 'gives' should be plural, corresponding to *kull muslimīna* 'all Muslims', which itself is incorrect (it should be either *kull al-muslimīna* or *kull muslim*) and is probably a calque of English (*all Muslims*) or Dutch (*alle Muslims*). The recipient *mister Ohlsson* is introduced with the preposition *li-* 'for, to', as in vernacular Arabic; in Standard Arabic the verb *ʾaʿṭā* 'to give' has a double object.

In line 5, the expression *murāduhu* 'his wish', immediately followed by a verb, may be explained as vernacular interference, too. In Syrian Arabic, for instance *bəddo* (< *bi-wuddihi* 'in his wish') is used for the modal verb 'to wish, want', in an asyndetic construction with the main verb, while in Standard Arabic the modal verb is construed with the conjunction *ʾan* 'that', followed by the main verb in the subjunctive mood. In Middle Arabic texts, the same construction with *murāduhu* is sometimes used as a Classicized form of the vernacular expression.

The verb in this line is probably *yatruk*; the two dots of ⟨t⟩ have the form of a hacek and thus resemble a *šadda* ◌ّ, but compare the spelling of ⟨$f_2$wt⟩ *vote* in line 1, which has the same form of the two dots in the letter ⟨t⟩. The entire phrase *yatruk šuġl al-Cape li-nafʿ ʾahl al-Cape* could perhaps be interpreted as 'to let the work of the Cape be to the profit of the people of the Cape', (i.e. 'to make the people of the Cape profit from the work of the Cape'), but

this is definitely a non-canonical use of the verb *taraka* 'to let, to abandon', possibly influenced by the Afrikaans verb *laat*, which may mean both 'to let, to abandon' and 'to make, to compel'. The last word *tafaḍḍalū* is probably meant as an invitation, 'go ahead!'.

4. The Context of the Election Pamphlet: Social History of the Cape

The setting of this election pamphlet are the parliamentary elections that took place in Cape Town in 1884, when it was a colony under British government. Much has been written about the special situation of Cape Town prior to the promulgation of the segregation laws of apartheid in the South African Republic. In accordance with the 'Great Tradition' of Cape Town liberalism (Bickford-Smith 1995b: 26), the franchise for these elections did not yet distinguish between colour, but allowed everyone with a certain small property to take part in the elections. The aim of this tradition was both practical and idealistic, but the most salient point is that it produced "local alliances across racial lines based on perceived mutual interest" (Bickford-Smith 1995a: 68), thus giving rise to a 'Small Tradition' of contacts based on mutual interest.

In the municipal elections of the 1870s and early 1880s in Cape Town, the opposing factions were the English-oriented 'Clean' party, which represented the interests of the wealthy businessmen who stood for sanitation reforms, and the 'Dirty' party, representing the Afrikaners who opposed reforms and were anti-English. Neither party considered the low number of eligible non-Whites to be a threat for White supremacy. Nonetheless, in some neighbourhoods, the number of potential non-White voters was high enough to make them an interesting prospect in canvassing. Interestingly, the representatives of the Afrikaner party were often accused by their opponents to be in league with the 'Malay', i.e. Muslim, voters, who likewise opposed reforms (Bickford-Smith 1995a: 57). During the 1884 elections, a plumping system of voting was still in force: this meant that each registered voter could cast four votes, either on one candidate or spread among candidates. For Coloured or Black candidates this meant that if they voted united, they could exercise a certain power, and even though the majority of the Coloured/Black population did not meet the conditions for voting, as a group they wielded considerable clout.

Anders Ohlsson (1841–1912), to whose campaign the election pamphlet belongs, is a typical example of Cape Town liberalism. Ohlsson was a

Swedish trader who engaged in various enterprises in the Cape Colony and in Namibia, until he founded a brewery in Cape Town, which became highly successful. It still exists and has become one of the largest breweries of the country (Ryan 1978). Ohlsson was known for his philanthropy and his liberal views about labour relations. He opposed the differentiation in salary for Coloured and non-Coloured employees and spoke out against flogging of employees. During his election campaign, he included in his staff both 'Malays' and Blacks. He was probably accustomed to dealing with Muslims: Shamil Jeppie (p.c.) points out that Muslims cooperated with the brewery for the manufacture of the wooden caskets needed to store the beer.

The focus in Ohlsson's campaign was an economic one, the promotion of colonial industries, which were in fierce competition with non-local industries. At the time of the campaign for the elections of 1884, there had been some attempts by the Government to import certain products such as timber, which constituted a threat to the local industries (Ryan 1978: 75). This explains the expression 'colonial work mission' in the pamphlet, which probably refers to Ohlsson's promise to promote local industries, 'colonial' being used in the sense of 'pertaining to the Cape colony' rather than 'pertaining to colonial domination'.

Ohlsson won the elections of 1884 and became one of the parliamentary representatives of Cape Town, which he remained until the elections of 1894, when he lost his seat. During these years, race distinctions started to play a role in Cape politics. At first, the plumping system had been a weapon against political adversaries. British White politicians in Cape Town canvassed for non-White votes in order to counter growing Afrikaner influence. These voters were only addressed as long as they could provide their four votes in the plumping system of cumulative votes. But once the Afrikaner Bond and the British had reached some sort of reconciliation, they were united in their efforts to reduce the influence of non-White voters and prevent the election of non-White candidates.

In 1893, Abu Bakr Effendi's son, Achmet Effendi, became a candidate for the parliamentary elections in 1894. During his campaign, White politicians proposed a new bill that was to abolish the system of cumulative votes. Some politicians explicitly linked this proposal to Achmet Effendi's candidacy and stated publicly that their aim was to prevent him from being elected as the first 'non-White' representative in Parliament. The abolishment of plumping was opposed by other politicians, chiefly by the representatives of Cape Town, among them Anders Ohlsson. In spite of the opposition, the bill was passed and the 'plumping system' was abolished. Under the four votes

system, Achmet Effendi would probably have been elected in the legislative assembly (Fransch 2009: 75).

Ironically, it was this same Achmet Effendi who had earlier on cooperated with Anders Ohlsson in his election campaign in 1884. Probably, he was the one responsible for the translation of the election pamphlet that is the topic of this article.

5. Linguistic Choices: Standard Language or Colloquial

At the end of the 19th century, the official languages of the Cape Colony were English and metropolitan Dutch. With respect to Afrikaans, one of the much-debated issues is to what extent there was at that time already a standard norm in force. A follow-up question is whether Arabic-Afrikaans, the written language of the Cape Muslims, was affected by any norms of written Dutch.

According to Raidt (1994), Cape Dutch was the language of a diglossic society, in which the written norm differed considerably from the spoken language: Afrikaans was the language people spoke, but whenever they wrote something down, they adhered to the norms of metropolitan Dutch. Deumert (2004), on the other hand, argues that the level of literacy was so low that no knowledge of the written norm can be presumed, so that written Afrikaans from this period can indeed be regarded as representative of (the variation in) the spoken language. As a matter of fact, for most inhabitants of the Colony the norms of metropolitan Dutch were unattainable, but the point is precisely that these were not the people who used the written medium. The use of the written medium was largely limited to those people who did have a modicum of literacy schooling. In such a speech community, it is not uncommon to find a rise in variation and deviation from the norm as the level of literacy increases: the more people get access to some degree of schooling, the larger the number of semi-literates, who, just like the literate select few, aim at the norms of the written language, but unlike them fall short of it (see Versteegh 2002).

Underlying Deumert's critique of Raidt (2004: 20–21) is her belief that theories of an early origin of changes in Afrikaans are mistaken because of the existing variation in later written records. But this variation is an artefact created by the increase in number of semi-literates having access to the written medium and introducing their spoken variants or rather, their approximations of the written standard. This means that an early change is very

well possible, even when later sources still show a large degree of variation. Deumert is right, however, when she criticizes the lack of attention for the creolized origin of Afrikaans. Raidt and other South-African linguists categorically deny the impact of the non-native (creolized) varieties of Dutch on the emergence of Afrikaans, attributing almost all changes vis-à-vis Standard Dutch to existing variation in Dutch dialects.

Deumert (2004: 40–41) takes a different view of the emergence of Afrikaans. She analyzes the development of the language as a process of hybridization, in which the community's means of communication are negotiated through competing influences from the lowest (basilectal) and the highest (acrolectal) varieties. Samples of informal writing, such as letters or diaries, are seen by her as a representation of the continuum between these levels (mesolect). Yet, she also concedes that the use of the written medium (2004: 41) "probably skewed much of the historical sources in the direction of acrolectal and (upper) mesolectal varieties". In similar situations of creolization elsewhere, such a process of accommodation to the standard language, usually designated with the term 'decreolization', is quite common. It involves all speakers of the creole, to a variable degree, depending on their schooling. Deumert correctly states (2004: 41) that in this respect, the late 19th century is an important period, because it was during this period that speakers of Afrikaans came in touch with the standard languages, Dutch and English, through the education system, which sensitized them to the norms of the standard language and led to the introduction of acrolectal/standard features, first in their written language, and then, inevitably, also in their formal speech.

It is, therefore, not the case that the literary dialect production of the late 19th century can be used straightforwardly as evidence of contemporary living speech. Deumert herself (2004: 53–54) points out that some of the private letters and diaries still exhibit a remarkable degree of variability and can by no means be regarded as evidence of the actual linguistic stage of Afrikaans. For many people, the norms of Standard Dutch remained an important source of interference. At the same time, after the establishment of the Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners in 1875, Afrikaans nationalists, partly in response to British domination, began to propagate Afrikaans as an independent language with its own rules, which were directly in opposition to the rules of Standard Dutch (Deumert 2004: 55–58). Other nationalists, however, especially in the Afrikaner Bond (founded in 1879) expressed their opposition to British domination by propagating Standard Dutch. In the latter perspective, basilectal varieties of Cape Dutch came to be regarded as primarily the domain of the non-White population.

What was the position of the Cape Muslim population in this linguistic-ideological landscape? Deumert (2004: 63–69) describes the linguistic situation in the Cape as one of considerable fluidity, in which for some people a variety approximate to Dutch was the normal speech, whereas for others intermediate forms were the norm, even in writing. For the early Muslim immigrants, Afrikaans was the language of their new country, which they started to write the way they had learned to write their first *lingua franca*, Malay, i.e. with the Arabic script that belonged to the school tradition they were part of. Since they stood outside the literary Cape Dutch tradition, the Cape Muslims initially did not care about the norms of the standard language and wrote down what they spoke. Inevitably, in their case, too, the end of the 19th century and the ongoing integration of their community in society at large brought about an increasing influence of the Dutch language, even though this was a language they had never spoken themselves and with which they had no historical ties.

The present document belongs to the group of Arabic-Afrikaans texts, but because of its contents and purpose it differs from the mainly theological treatises of this period. Since the election campaign for which this pamphlet was written, involved close cooperation between Coloureds and Whites, the translator may well have felt that the style of the translation should be as elevated as possible. It is therefore not surprising that this early document betrays the same influence of Standard Dutch that must have characterized the elevated registers of all Capetonians at this time, whether Coloured or White. The use of Classical Arabic in the pamphlet served to underline the importance of the occasion, rather than drawing attention to the in-group nature of the text.

In his study of standardization tendencies in Coloured Cape Dutch, especially in Muslim texts, Stell (2007) deals with the issue of linguistic interference from the standard language. For the Muslim Cape Dutch speakers, who had only minimal access to the secular education that promoted the use of Standard Dutch forms before the officialization of Afrikaans, interference from Dutch norms was much less stringent than for White speakers. Nonetheless, some of the Standard Dutch forms that are found in late 19th century White Cape Dutch texts are also found in the Arabic-Afrikaans texts of this period. According to Stell (2007: 116–117), for in-group use, the Muslim community had established a new high standard, consisting of colloquial Afrikaans with many loanwords from Arabic, English, and Malay. Yet, this did not prevent Coloured Capetonians from using Standard Dutch forms in their speech for out-group purposes. Davids (1992) has hypothesized that in this respect there may have been a difference between those texts that were

written in Arabic script and those that were written in Roman script (cf. Stell 2007: 96–97). Deumert (2004: 69) likewise states that Muslim writings in Roman script represented an intermediate form, which to some extent was influenced by Standard Dutch, whereas their writings in Arabic script were closer to basilectal Afrikaans. Stell partially agrees with this, but he adds that some of the standard features are found throughout the texts, whether in Arabic or in Roman script. These disappeared only with the official status of Afrikaans in the 20th century, when these forms were prohibited.

Some of the texts in Arabic-Afrikaans may no doubt provide us with more or less authentic examples of spoken Afrikaans. Many writers had not received any schooling in Dutch and were not literate in that language, so that the norms of metropolitan Dutch did not apply to them. Probably, Abu Bakr Effendi was more fluent in English than in Afrikaans: according to his biographers he did learn Afrikaans, but with his first wife he communicated with the help of an Arabic/English dictionary. This was, however, by no means the case of all Muslims: some of them believed that children had to learn proper Dutch and, accordingly, condemned the use of the vernacular in religious instruction, for instance Abdol Burns (Deumert 2004: 52).

There are three features in the election pamphlet that could be regarded as traces of interference from Dutch written: i. absence of *n*-deletion in possessives (i.e. *syn* 'his' instead of *sy*); ii. absence of *t*-apocope (i.e. *best* instead of *bes*); and iii. inflected verb form (i.e., *gaat* instead of *ga*). These features in the pamphlet can be compared with other writings from the Abu Bakr family, in the first place Abu Bakr's extensive treatises on theological topics. For the writing style of his son Achmet Effendi, we depend on the letter he wrote after his defeat at the elections of 1894, when he had turned twenty-nine and left for Singapore to become Ottoman consul; he died in 1903. His letter, reproduced by Davids (2011: 97; see also Hoedemaekers 2006: 81–82, 112), shows the private use of Arabic-Afrikaans. It constitutes an interesting point of comparison with the pamphlet, which is supposed to have been translated in the Arabic school under his directorship. One of Abu Bakr's other children, Hisham Neamatollah (Ni'matullah), who founded the South African Moslims' Association (1903) and taught at his school in Port Elizabeth until his death in 1947, left behind three treatises in Arabic-Afrikaans, among them *Hāḏā ʿilmu ḥālin li-ṣ-ṣibyāni/Hierdie Mooi Kennis/This Beautiful Knowledge*, which was printed in Constantinople (1893).

The first feature, possessive forms without *n*-deletion, is quite common in 19th century Afrikaans. According to Ponelis (1993: 226–227), 19th century documents have predominantly *syn* instead of *sy*, agreeing with the forms of written Dutch, even though Afrikaans demonstrably had *sy*, *my* long before

this period (Deumert 2004: 187–188). Abu Bakr Effendi, Achmet Effendi, and Hisham Ni'matullah all use *syn* ⟨say^{0}n^0⟩ or ⟨syn⟩, rather than *sy*, agreeing with the form used in the pamphlet.

The second feature, the use of the verb *ga* 'to go' with an inflection marker, is more difficult to interpret. At an early period (second half of the 18th century), all verbs had lost their inflection markers in Afrikaans. The use of verbal forms with inflection markers in the 19th century, which was especially frequent in the case of verbs from the athematic class, such as *ga* 'to go' (*hy gaat/gaan*; *ons gaan/gaat*), could therefore be regarded as evidence of interference by Standard Dutch norms. Deumert (2004: 144–146) cites one group of letter writers in whose language the large numbers of 'misused' inflected forms could indeed be seen as an example of hypercorrection, but for the verbs of the athematic class she maintains that the relatively low number of hypercorrect forms precludes their interpretation as cases of interference from Standard Dutch. Rather, she believes that in the case of these verbs, the norms of Afrikaans had not yet set, and there was still variation in the colloquial use, as illustrated by the written samples. In other words, the phrase *hy gaat* in our pamphlet can be interpreted in two ways: it may be an instance of everyday variation (intra-personal or inter-personal?), or, alternatively, it may be a case of a written norm, differing from what the writer would normally say in everyday language. At a later period, lack of knowledge of the norms of metropolitan Dutch cannot be presumed, so that inflection markers could be used (hyper)correctly. In Abu Bakr we find *gaat* being used as an infinitive: *kan gaat* 'can go'. Achmet Effendi uses the agreement marker *-t* with the 1st person of the verb *gaan*: *ek gaat* ⟨'yk ḫ̮'t⟩ 'I go'. Hisham Ni'matullah has *staan* ⟨saita'n^0⟩ 'stands [3rd pers sg]' (8.11).

The third feature, the absence of *t*-apocope, which is exhibited by the phrase *syn best* (i.e., *sy bes* 'his best') in our pamphlet, has been studied extensively (see Deumert 2004: 146–151). Deumert (2004: 149) observes that *t*-apocope is used by those writers who deliberately wrote in dialect as a sociolinguistic stereotype. Presumably, this statement may be reversed: if this feature was indeed regarded as a stereotype, there was probably a tendency to reinstate the *t* in formal writing (and there were probably instances of hypercorrection as well). Regardless of whether the change was completed earlier (Ponelis 1993: 155) or later (Deumert 2004: 148), the situation at the end of the 19th century may well have been such that *t*-apocope was seen as uncouth or impolite, and therefore not appropriate for an official election pamphlet. Abu Bakr applies *t*-apocope to the following nouns with the same phonological structure as *best*: *kos* 'cost', *bees* 'animal', *nes* 'nest', *vas*

'tight', *naas* 'next to'. It is obvious, therefore, that he does not add *t* in order to sound more polite. I was unable to find any instances in the letter written by Achmet Effendi, or in the treatise written by Hisham Ni'matullah.

6. Conclusion

The sample of our election pamphlet is too small to warrant any definitive conclusions, but it seems fair to conclude that at least in some respects the author of the text may have tended to upgrade the writing norms towards the Dutch standard just like most writers of Afrikaans in his days. What is also clear from the election pamphlet is that in the 1880s, both White and Coloured Capetonians felt that the proper language to address the Muslim voters was Afrikaans (albeit a formal kind of Afrikaans in accordance with the high prestige associated with parliamentary elections), and that this should be done by means of Arabic script. Many ordinary White voters may have thought that the text of the entire pamphlet was pure and simple Arabic, but this was the case only for the last few lines. Most Muslim voters, even if they could not understand the Arabic text, recognized it as such. Since they were competent in reading Arabic script, they could of course understand the Afrikaans portion of the text.

At any rate, the hypothesis that Arabic-Afrikaans documents are less susceptible to the influence of the standard Dutch language is not entirely true: this depends on the function of the document. Documents for secular use in Arabic-Afrikaans—of which admittedly there were only a few—were probably more affected by the current norms for the writing of Afrikaans, which were still under the influence of the Dutch standard, than religious treatises. The writer of the present text cleverly used the language norms available in order to ensure maximum impact on the potential voters: they are addressed as Muslims, but at the same time as influential members of society, whose vote could really make a difference. This is the double message of the pamphlet, and it was a message that could not have been lost on the target readership.

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